PROBLEMS OF COMMUNISM

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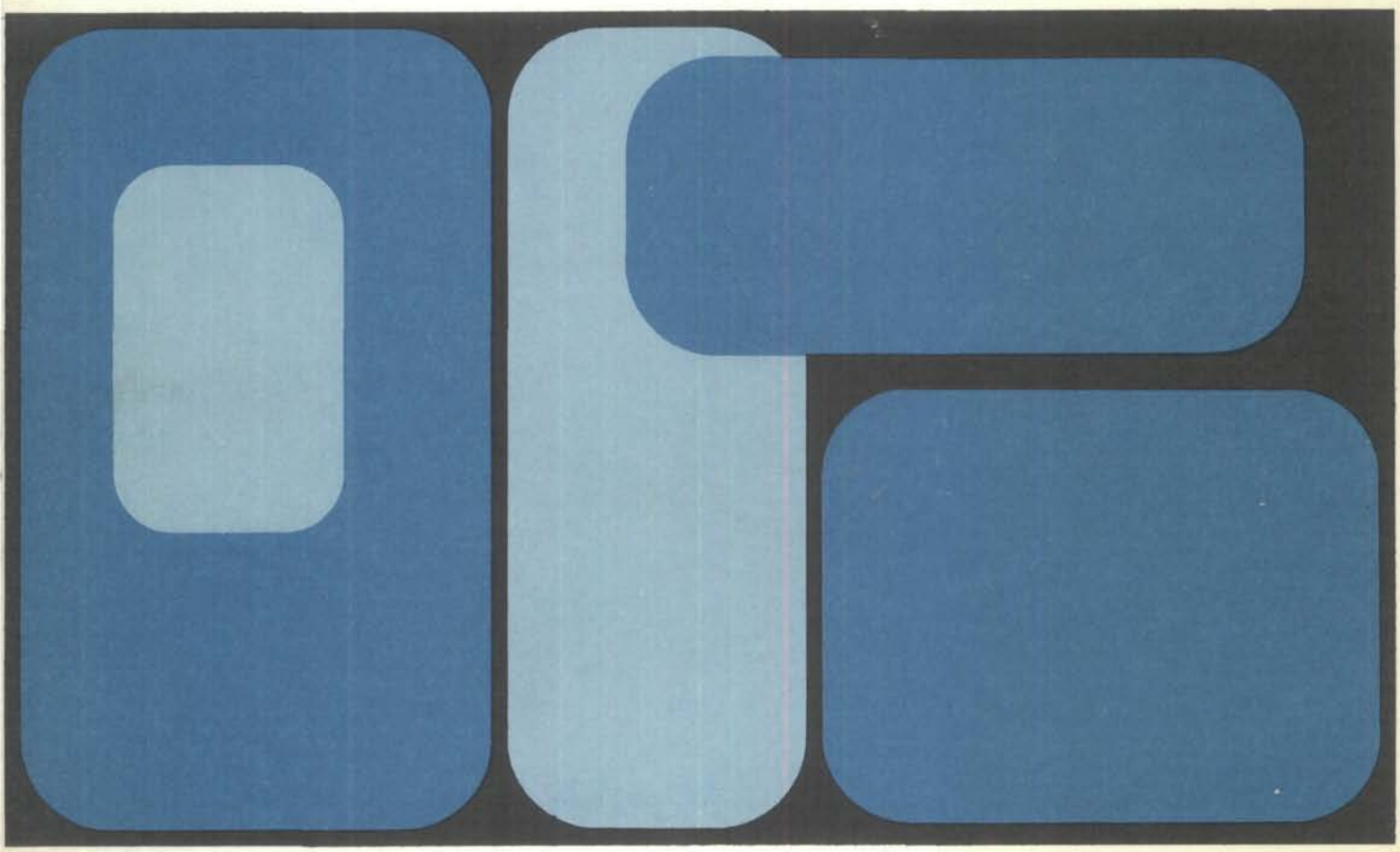

RUSSIA: LITERATURE AND THE ARTS
ASIA: COLLECTIVE SECURITY

INTERNATIONAL COMMUNISM: "MONOLITHIC" VS. "CRUMBLING" COMMUNISM

William E. Griffith
Seweryn Bialer
Tibor Szamuely
Renato Mieli
Leo Labedz
Andrew Ezergailis

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To Our Readers: The present issue of *Problems of Communism* is the last to appear under the editorship of Abraham Brumberg, who has taken a leave of absence in order to devote himself to a book on current political opposition in the Soviet Union. As of the May-June 1970 issue, the Editor of *Problems of Communism* will be Theodore Frankel, until recently Senior Research Analyst at the US Library of Congress (Washington, DC). and one-time Associate Editor of *Commentary* magazine (New York).

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Myths, Perceptions, and Policy: II

EDITORS' NOTE: In our last issue we presented the first part of a symposium initiated by Andrew Ezergailis' essay discussing the rival "myths" of "monolithic" and "crumbling" communism. Below, the symposium is concluded with several additional commentaries and a final reply from Mr. Ezergailis. It should be noted that Mr. Ezergailis penned his remarks without having seen the commentaries by Messrs. Mieli and Labedz, which were received too late to be sent to him.

William E. Griffith:

Ideological Cobwebs

I am afraid that I am as bemused by the factual errors in Mr. Ezergailis' article as by the faultiness of much of his analysis. At the risk of sounding somewhat harsh, let me confess that his essay made me think of how an imaginary counsellor of the Ottoman Empire, entrusted with advising the Sublime Porte on the doings of those demented fanatics, the European Christians, might have reacted to the news of the Thirty Years War: Christianity was, it seemed, no longer monolithic—but, he would hasten to add, surely no less dangerous! Indeed, the temporary feud between the Bourbons and the Hapsburgs would eventually strengthen the international Christian movement!

Let me come to some specific points. I begin with Mr. Ezergailis' vocabulary: "international Communist movement," "the Communist world," etc. (He does, at least, spare us "the international Communist conspiracy"—although one suspects that in his view the strengthening of communism which he sees resulting from the Sino-Soviet split will surely restore it to its pristine vigor.) My comment is: to be sure, communism does exist, as does Christianity, but its secular representations in sovereign states are not the less but the more hostile towards one another as a result of this shared ideology.

With respect to Vietnam, it is certainly not—as Mr. Ezergailis asserts—"perfectly reasonable to assume that it was the very opposite myth—that of 'crumbling communism'—which was responsible for the kind of US involvement that developed in Vietnam." On the contrary, the Kennedy and Johnson administrations were seriously concerned lest US intervention in Vietnam bring Moscow and Peking back together again. They need not have been, for it predictably (as, indeed, some experts did predict) pushed the Russians and Chinese farther apart. But the concern was there.

Perhaps Mr. Ezergailis' most questionable assertion is that "somehow schism has been at the very core of the movement's strength. It is doubtful that the schism between Communist China and the Soviet Union has meant or will mean any weakening of the

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Communist movement as such, either internally or in the world at large." If one can believe that, one can believe anything. The Sino-Soviet split has clearly weakened not only Moscow and Peking, but also the effectiveness of the Communist ideology. So did the Protestant Reformation weaken the Holy Roman Empire and Christendom—even the Ottoman Turks knew that! And to declare, as the author does further on, that Moscow and Peking have "gained new strength and new friends and allies as a consequence of the split" and that it may prove "a catalyst for a renewal of Communist ideological zeal" is equally wrong-minded. The position of both Moscow and Peking among Communist and radical groups is weaker today than it was in 1959. And to cite radical students' enthusiasm for Mao and Ché as evidence to the contrary misses the point again: most radical students are much more enthusiastic about Ho, Fidel, and Ché than about Brezhnev (whom they view as a dreary, bureaucratic state-capitalist!) or even Mao—precisely, in large part, because of the split and of Mao's intolerance of any deviation.

As for a renewal of Communist ideological zeal, the New Left is certainly reviving revolutionary ardor and often echoes Communist ideological slogans, but it is in fact much more anarchist than Communist, and is characterized by the very same lack of discipline, organization, and asceticism for which Marx and Lenin condemned Bakunin and his disciples. Moreover, while it is still unclear whether or not the Cultural Revolution will ultimately strengthen Communist China (as Mr. Ezergailis believes it will), it certainly has weakened her for some time to come. Finally, to assert that one reason why Moscow for a time tolerated the 1968 Czechoslovak developments was because they created a salutary "atmosphere of turbulence" in Eastern Europe is to defy common sense. Brezhnev and Kosygin are not masochists; they are men who enjoy power and intend to continue enjoying it. The historical record is quite clear on their continuing efforts, ending ultimately in invasion, to stop and reverse the Czechoslovak developments—and there is no evidence to the contrary.

The fundamental weakness of Mr. Ezergailis' position is defined quite well by what he sees as the mistaken position of his opponents: that "realities of modern economic life and considerations of national power and self-interest" are more powerful than ideology. This is true, not false as Mr. Ezergailis thinks; and what is more, it has always been true, in modern times, of ideological movements in power. It was true of the struggle between the Guelfs and Ghibellines; it was true of Francis I of France, that "most Christian King" who allied with the Ottoman Porte against the Hapsburgs; it was true of Lenin at the Peace of Brest-Litovsk; it was true, perhaps above all, of Stalin; it is certainly true of Mao; and, as Havana and Hanoi know to their sorrow, it has been true of Soviet and Chinese policies with respect to them. For who, after all, has remained a genuinely internationalist Communist—or Christian—after coming to power as a head of state? I know of no one.

This is not to say that ideology is of no importance. Brezhnev and Mao are certainly not just Great Russian and Han chauvinists. But if only because the capacity of the human mind for rationalization and self-delusion is unlimited, ideology rarely, if ever, contradicts national self-interest in the minds of rulers of states, although it may—as with the pan-Germanism of Hitler and the pan-Latin-Americanism of Castro—dangerously expand it. Nevertheless, national interest

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is never secondary, and in a period such as the present—a period not of disintegrating but of pluralistic communism—it is particularly predominant. Insofar as one can project from present trends, it is likely to remain so.

Mr. Ezergailis is correct in maintaining that the declining ideological cohesion of the Communist world does not necessarily reduce the dangers facing the West, whether in Vietnam or elsewhere. But these dangers emanate not from "communism" but rather from imperialist, expansionist powers whose national interests are contrary to ours in many respects—specifically, the Soviet Union and the Chinese People's Republic. Their Communist ideological orientation perhaps makes them more expansionist; but the Russian and Chinese Empires also were expansionist. It is not in the interest of the Western powers to allow Western Europe or Eastern Asia to be dominated by one or more hostile powers allied against them. That these hostile powers are Communist is of secondary importance; that they are expansionist and hostile is the primary consideration (although, of course, the Western nations also have certain parallel interests with them—for example, with both in limiting the risk of atomic war, and with each in restraining the other). If analysts and policymakers would clear their minds of the antiquated ideological cobwebs with which Mr. Ezergailis' essay is so liberally festooned, they could more easily see the real world and act accordingly.

Seweryn Bialer:

Precision and Distortion

If I understand Mr. Ezergailis correctly, he is saying that Western evaluations of communism oscillate cyclically between stressing the elements that make for its unity and strength and emphasizing those that tend to produce disintegration and weakness. No doubt, the pendulum at present has swung towards the latter, and no doubt also—as Mr. Ezergailis points out—yesterday's evaluations of communism as "strong and monolithic" and today's assessments of it as "weak and crumbling" can both be criticized as exaggerated. One can readily accept the proposition that "communism" was never as strong and monolithic in the past as it was thought to be, and is not today as weak and fragmented as some analysts allege. Having said this, however, one can argue that all evaluations of complex social phenomena tend toward exaggeration—even when the analyst is relatively free from the ideological or emotional proclivities which, in Mr. Ezergailis' view, have distorted some Western views of Communist affairs.

If for no other reason, this propensity to exaggerate exists because evaluations of complex phenomena are analytical in character and selective in focus. They reduce a variegated reality to theoretical generalizations—that is, they simplify. While one may agree with Mr. Ezergailis that this reductionism is especially pronounced when dealing with communism, one can correct such exaggerations only by being precise in one's own formulations and definitions—which Mr. Ezergailis is not. Also, in his zeal to expose the sundry distortions and exaggerations, Mr. Ezergailis fails to appreciate that the process of disintegration and weakening has in fact been the principal trend in the evolution of communism over the last two decades.

Confusion over alleged myths about "communism" often derives from terminological imprecision. When one speaks about communism, is one referring to an ideology, to an international movement, to a sociopolitical system which a number of countries have adopted, or to a power bloc or alliance system in which those countries participate? Without distinguishing between the different connotations of "communism," one can scarcely begin to assess its weaknesses and strengths. By the same token, the terms "strength" and "weakness," "monolithic" or "crumbling," also convey ambiguities: they are not "either-or" propositions but always involve differences of degree, and they may—and in the present case do—refer to different aspects of the phenomenon of "communism."

If the term is simply taken as a synonym for the Soviet Union, one would certainly agree that Soviet industrial and military strength has grown immensely in the post-Stalin period, and that Soviet influence in world affairs has increased substantially. Some analysts suggest that a process of stagnation or disintegration has set in in the USSR itself, but obviously the question of whether "*communism*" is disintegrating does not focus or depend on the presence or absence of stagnation within the Soviet Union, but centers rather on other aspects and dimensions of

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"communism," especially communism as an ideology and as an international movement.

For industrial nations, the appeal of the Communist ideology as a vision of the future and as a program of action has declined drastically. Its irrelevance to the dilemmas posed by the evolution of modern societies has been abundantly demonstrated, and as a consequence it retains little power to attract or to mobilize, especially the young. Even such an exception as Italy supports the argument, inasmuch as the success and attraction of communism there depend largely on the ability of the Italian party to dissociate itself from Soviet internal and international practices and to develop its own unorthodox line. As for the developing countries, experience has largely dispelled the illusion of the early 1960's that the Soviet model of industrialization, together with Soviet economic aid, could serve as a springboard to Western modernity and affluence. As a revolutionary doctrine in these countries (and, it may be added, in developed countries as well), communism has been decisively outflanked, among the impatient and dissatisfied, among intellectuals and young people, by left-wing radicals of several varieties who regard Soviet strategies and tactics in much the same light that the Soviet Communists in the late 1920's and early 1930's regarded European socialism—that is, as a conservative betrayal of Marx's revolutionary ideas and a sort of "social fascism."

True, the international Communist movement has never been free of dissension and schism. Mr. Ezergailis appears to accept Stalin's dictum that the movement becomes stronger by purging itself of dissenting elements, and perhaps this argument was valid in the past when such purges affected marginal groups and strengthened Soviet control over the movement as a whole. But today's schisms result from initiatives taken by important segments of the world Communist movement and not just by the Soviets alone. Moreover, they involve not merely small sectarian groups but parties in power, first and foremost the Chinese Communists. One is perplexed by Mr. Ezergailis' bald and unsubstantiated assertion that "it is doubtful that the schism between Communist China and the Soviet Union has meant or will mean any weakening of the Communist movement as such, either internally or in the world at large." I suspect that the author must be the sole surviving observer who, while acknowledging the fundamental character the Sino-Soviet schism, nevertheless harbors suspicions of the "you-can-trust-the-Communists-to-know-what-they-are-doing" variety.

One is equally at a loss to comprehend Mr. Ezergailis' prediction that the Chinese Communists will probably emerge from the Cultural Revolution stronger than before—a statement again made without any supporting evidence. Of course, all things are possible, but can Mr. Ezergailis seriously doubt that China has been weakened militarily, economically, and politically by an upheaval which took on the proportions of a civil war and resulted in the virtual destruction of the party and administrative apparatus? If this were not the case, how explain the paramount importance attached by the Peking regime to the question of reestablishing order? And is it not likely to take a very long time to restore a semblance of the former cohesion and purpose, especially with the prospect of a struggle for Mao's succession looming in the future?

Of course, the Soviet Union still effectively controls a number of parties which are out of power, but the degree of this control is inversely proportional to the importance of these parties in the life of their own countries, to the size of their memberships, and to the dynamism of their leaderships. The Soviet leaders also can still achieve a show, if not of unity, at least of "comradely relations," as they did at the 1969 Moscow conference, but they can do this only by adopting resolutions which represent the lowest mutually acceptable common denominator, and by stressing generalities or the movement's common heritage, while avoiding all important points of contention and division.

It is true that both crisis and schism have accompanied the Soviet Union and the Communist movement throughout their history. But today's crises can scarcely be regarded as the normal growing pains of expansion and development. To my mind, the evidence points rather to the conclusion that the last two decades have been marked predominantly by the disintegration of communism as an international movement, its weakening as an imperial system, and by stagnation and decline in its appeal as an ideology. Admittedly, it would be extremely risky to underrate the potential of the Soviet Union for asserting and extending its great-power ambitions. Nor can the diversionary potential of the Communist movement, or rather movements—even in their present state—be dismissed lightly. But today, as never before, the major danger to the advanced Western nations lies in their own crises of leadership, in the possibility that their leaders may not be equal to the task of devising effective means of utilizing their tremendous technological and economic resources to overcome, within their own societies, the discontinuities and dilemmas of the new age—dilemmas for which neither communism nor existing Communist societies provide any relevant answers.

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Tibor Szamuely:

A Problem of Semantics

"There is something about communism that fosters myth-making." One can hardly quarrel with this opening statement by Mr. Ezergailis, even though mythogenesis is by no means an attribute unique to communism. But he then sets out to demolish what he believes to be the two principal myths that have bedeviled Western thinking about communism since World War II—"the myth of monolithic communism, which reached its apogee in the early 1950's," and "the myth of disintegrating or crumbling communism," which has become fashionable in recent years. These two myths, he maintains, have provided the theoretical underpinning of Western policy since the war, and it is high time that they be replaced by a more realistic outlook.

And so say all of us. However, instead of clarifying the situation, Mr. Ezergailis has succeeded in confusing it still further; instead of dismantling actual misconceptions, he erects a couple of straw men which he then triumphantly knocks down. In short, he has merely added another myth to the mythology of communism—surely a supererogatory exercise. The two "myths" have never existed in the form described by Mr. Ezergailis, let alone influenced policy-makers—which probably explains why the author neither names those whose views he is criticizing, nor cites the statements by them that he sets out to refute.

The essay's fatal fault lies in its indiscriminate use of the single term "communism" to cover a wide variety of meanings: the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the Soviet government, Russia, the Soviet bloc, the Communist bloc, individual non-Russian Communist parties, governments of the satellite states, China, the international Communist movement, Marxist-Leninist ideology—even the present-day New Leftist student movement in the West. Quite clearly, these are differing—sometimes widely differing—concepts. Just as clearly, the lumping together of a motley of political and theoretical concepts under a single all-embracing and meaningless heading can only lead to utter confusion.

Mr. Ezergailis argues from the extraordinary assumption that there is such a thing as communism in general, that any statement which can be made about any "Communist" phenomenon is equally valid with regard to every other manifestation of "communism." Most frequently the author uses "communism" as a synonym for the Soviet state, which he tries to avoid mentioning by name. For example: "The Bolsheviks were stronger in 1917 than in 1903, in 1930 than in 1922, and in 1955 than in 1944. Is there any reason to believe that communism is weaker today than it was in 1956?" What a glorious non-sequitur! The author's rhetorical question is easily answered: Certainly *the USSR* is a mightier power today than in 1956, but *communism* is much weaker in many respects—as a faith, as an international political movement, and as a power bloc. How on earth can the author proceed to equate the two?

After listing *Soviet* internal and external failures in the 1920's and 1930's, the author remarks that this record could hardly have inspired fear of *communism* in the West. Again the issues are completely confounded: while Soviet Russia was not much of a menace in those days, the Western Communist parties were far stronger and infinitely more feared than they are today when the Communist movement in the most highly-developed Western countries is, to all intents and purposes, dead.

Whenever the author descends from the clouds of pure theorizing to mention hard facts, he invariably comes to grief. He quotes Robert Sherwood on the impact of the battle of Stalingrad ("Russia assumed the position of a great international power") and immediately mounts his hobbyhorse again: "From that moment on, the image of monolithic communism gradually grew until it became the predominant view—almost the obsession—of the early 1950's." But Sherwood is talking specifically about the image of *Russia as a great power*, and the attempt to transform this into the image of *monolithic communism* simply will not pass muster.

And again: "The fruit of *Soviet* victory was not just the defeat of Germany and the extension of *Soviet* power, but also ultimate success in selling the image of *monolithic communism*" (my italics). Not at all. As Mr. Ezergailis himself makes clear, this was not a "Communist" but a Soviet victory, and if it "sold" anything, what was "sold" was not the image of "monolithic communism," but—rightly or wrongly—the image of an immensely powerful, aggressive,

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monolithic and totalitarian Soviet Russia intent on conquering the whole of Europe.

The military might of the USSR is not the only argument invoked by the author to prop up his generalizations about "communism." Sometimes "communism" seems to mean nothing more to him than police terror in the satellites: *e.g.*, "The weakening of communism in Czechoslovakia before the five-power occupation of August 1968 led immediately to its strengthening in Poland and East Germany." By this line of reasoning, which equates intensification of police repression with a strengthening of communism, "communism" must have been strongest of all in 1937-38.

In general, Eastern Europe causes Mr. Ezergailis the most trouble. And not surprisingly. "Communism" there, whether monolithic or otherwise, is no more than an alien system imposed by a foreign conqueror (except in the cases of Yugoslavia and Albania) and used to maintain a colonial status. What does the author make of it all? "The cases of Yugoslavia in 1948 and of Hungary in 1956 both prove—if they they prove anything—that communism was not as united and strong when it was thought to have been monolithic, just as the case of Czechoslavakia in 1968 proves that communism is not as weak and disunited now when it is thought to be disintegrating and crumbling." With due respect, these cases prove nothing of the kind. 1948 demonstrated that the communist regime in Yugoslavia was strong ("monolithic") enough to withstand immense external pressure; 1956, that Hungarian communism was so fragile that it collapsed literally within hours and had to be resuscitated by a massive Soviet invasion; and 1968 showed that communism had failed disastrously in Czechoslavakia, that the system was rapidly disintegrating, and that Russia once again had the will and the power to intervene. All three episodes also prove that the writ of the USSR runs only as far as its tanks can go.

Mr. Ezergailis further puts forward the interesting idea that Czechoslovakia represented the failure of "a Soviet attempt to experiment with federalism," showing that "federalism doesn't work for the Soviet bloc as it does, by and large, for the NATO alliance." The theory itself is, I believe, hardly tenable. But even assuming that there was "a Soviet experiment with federalism" in Czechoslovakia, and that its failure proved that "federalism doesn't work for the Soviet bloc," what has any of this to do with "monolithic" or "crumbling" communism? Indeed what has it got to do with "communism" at all—except perhaps as an excuse for the Soviet exercise in armed imperialist intervention?

"When *I* use a word," declared a well-known figure of fiction, "it means just what I choose it to mean—neither more nor less." So it is with Mr. Ezergailis. In the second half of his essay, "communism" suddenly comes to mean "Marxist-Leninist ideology." We learn that the "crumbling of communism" involves essentially the "crumbling of Leninism" and closely resembles the weakening of Christianity in modern times. Again one is struck by the semantic confusion. "If one could prove that the international Communist movement is undergoing major changes in terms of Leninism," asserts the author, "then it could indeed be said that communism as we know it is crumbling." Why? The author has already asserted that from 1903 to the present day "communism" has been getting stronger and stronger; yet everyone knows that throughout this time Leninism has constantly been "undergoing major changes." If "communism" is becoming stronger, then it cannot simultaneously be crumbling. Besides, even if the author had made the necessary distinctions in this case, he would still be wrong in his conclusion. The evolution of Leninism has been a source not of weakness but of strength. Where, indeed, would the Soviet regime be today if Leninism had not been regularly updated?

"Apparently," Mr. Ezergailis goes on to say, "it is psychologically impossible to be 'a little bit' Communist: one cannot be a lukewarm Communist or feel lukewarm towards communism once one has converted from it . . . For the true Communist, faith in the ideology, or the loss of it, must be total." I fear that this passage reveals a lamentable lack of understanding of the nature and the appeals of communism. Not only is it possible to be "a little bit Communist," or to embrace some parts of the faith while rejecting others, but this has today become an extremely widespread phenomenon. To cite one example, much of the present protest movement in the USSR is a demand for a return to "genuine communism," *e.g.*, to the unadulterated teachings of Lenin. Is it these protestors who are "true Communists," or is it Mr. Brezhnev—or does everyone belong in the same category? Piotr Grigorenko, Larissa Daniel, Pavel Litvinov, Piotr Yakir and innumerable others profess a sincere belief in the truth of communism, yet they reject the political system that calls itself "Communist." Regardless of whether they are right or wrong, Mr. Ezergailis would have done well to draw a similar distinction. And what about Dubcek's "socialism with a human face"? Did Dubcek believe totally in "communism," or did he totally reject it? There are more things in Heaven and Earth—or in communism—than are accounted for by Mr. Ezergailis' theories.

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I will not go further into these theories or the factual errors in the author's supporting arguments. The question now is: Have the myths of "monolithic communism" and of "crumbling communism" really determined the course of Western policy since World War II? I believe not. The postwar policy-makers may have been mistaken in their assumptions, but what they feared was not "monolithic communism" but Russian expansionism. The so-called revisionist school has gone to great lengths to muddle the issue and to depict Western—especially US—foreign policy as a great anti-Communist crusade. This distortion of history is unwittingly supported by Mr. Ezergailis.

The facts, however, speak otherwise. Western statesmen were concerned not with theoretical models of "communism" but with the realities of Russian military power. Every important Western foreign policy statement, from Churchill's Fulton (Missouri) speech, through Truman's message to Congress of March 12, 1947, to President Kennedy's ultimatum on Soviet missiles in Cuba, and beyond, addressed itself, rightly or wrongly, to the threat of Soviet (or Chinese) expansionism, *not* of "monolithic communism." When "containment" has been spoken of as the basis of US foreign policy, the object to be contained has been *Russia* (or China), not "communism". George Kennan's famous article on "The Sources of Soviet Conduct" laid down this principle with the utmost clarity: "The main element of any United States policy towards the Soviet Union must be that of a long-term, patient, but firm and vigilant containment of Russian expansive tendencies." Twenty-odd years later the essence of this policy remains unchanged. True, Western attitudes towards the Soviet Union have undergone certain modifications, but rather than the alleged fetish of "crumbling communism" the fashionable myths have been those of "liberalization," "convergence," "polycentrism," "the end of ideology," etc. However much I may disagree with these myths, they do make more sense than Mr. Ezergailis' simplistic theories; at least they recognize that a phenomenon which has a multiplicity of meanings requires a diversity of approaches.

"Communism," concludes the author, "is neither monolithic nor crumbling." On the contrary, "communism" is *both* monolithic and crumbling. It all depends on which aspect of communism one is referring to: the Soviet Communist party or the Leninist ideology, the satellite governments or the Sino-Soviet relationship, the world Communist movement or the Soviet police-state. Without clarifying the terms of reference, the whole argument becomes an exercise in futility.

Renato Mieli:

Complexities Simplified

Mr. Ezergailis is correct in asserting that the two interpretations of communism which he labels "monolithic" and "crumbling" are oversimplified and dangerous myths. The difficulty with Mr. Ezergailis' position lies in the very topic under discussion. What, in fact, is communism? If by communism one means Soviet power, whether direct or indirect, that is one thing. If something different is meant, it would be well to make that point clear. Since the matter is complex, my commentary will concentrate on the first proposition.

Power, as we know, is expressed and measured in terms of a broad range of relations between rulers and ruled, running from the most extreme authoritarianism to almost complete freedom of choice. To discuss communism in terms of Soviet power, we must bear in mind the connection between the degree of monolithism of Soviet power on the one hand, and the given geographic area and specific time period on the other. If we limit our examination to the Soviet state, we can clearly discern a maximum of centralization under Stalin, followed by a decline under his successors. But is that what really interests us? Obviously we have to examine the problem of "monolithic" or "crumbling" communism in the broader arena, comprised of all the countries in which Soviet power or influence holds sway.

Unfortunately, difficulties arise as soon as we are faced with the task of defining the area under examination, if only because formal terms often obscure reality. Thus, if we were to limit ourselves to that area which has remained in the "Soviet bloc," we would be hard put to classify a country like Romania, which over the past few years has been able to recover a good share of its independence. Another difficulty arises when we examine the relationship between the leadership and the masses. From Lenin to our own

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day, Soviet leaders have always pursued the end of expanding the sphere in which they could impose their will. Whether they have used persuasive or coercive means has depended upon the conditions of the moment. In this sense, there is no rigid power theory to which the Soviet leaders adhere. What has been essential is that the ruler be obeyed. Within the Soviet state itself, Stalin used more brutal methods than Khrushchev, but the objective was the same. Their difference in style did not weaken the monolithic substructure on which their exercise of power was based.

The discussion becomes more complicated when one turns from the Soviet state to the Soviet bloc, from direct to indirect power. Here the difficulty lies in evaluating correctly the relationship between the loyalty of local leaderships to the CPSU and the coercive or repressive threat represented by the Soviet military apparatus. Since local leaderships must, in turn, respond to their respective peoples, the ability of the heads of the Soviet state to make themselves obeyed by those of Eastern Europe, for example, is always subject to change and in some cases uncertain.

To put it differently, the degree of the Soviets' influence is partially determined by the military power of Moscow; but it is also determined, to a considerable extent, by the ability of the rulers of the satellite countries to obtain, by authoritarian measures or by mutual consent, the obedience of the masses subject to their rule. Experience seems to have proved that in all the Communist countries where, at some time or another, the local rulers have tried out less authoritarian methods, sooner or later a centrifugal trend has developed to pose the potential threat of a break with Moscow. And only by reversion to Soviet-style authoritarianism has that danger been averted.

Consequently, the issue is not whether Soviet leaders are subjectively inclined toward a monolithic or a polycentric system. Obviously they seek (as they have always sought) to maximize their own power. The point is that in this unceasing quest, they resort to a wide variety of tactics, pushing their influence only to the extent and in the way they deem most effective. Finding the right combination of persuasive and coercive means to impose their will on so many different and widely separated peoples is no easy undertaking. It is a question of using ideological, economic, political and military measures in the most appropriate way, case by case, at the right moment. Hence it can be said that at any given moment the Moscow-centered bloc contains elements of monolithism, decentralization and potential dissolution all at once.

Where persuasion (*i.e.*, ideology) is sufficient, Moscow need not resort to economic pressure or repressive threats. Thus, many Communist parties accept the Soviet line for idealistic reasons, without asking for economic help or any other form of compensation. The Soviet leaders are aware that in a crucial moment this type of fealty could prove to be risky and utopian and therefore do not place excessive reliance on it. But they know how to use it to their advantage, if only to neutralize and weaken hostile forces outside the area under their direct control.

Where Soviet power succeeds because of the calculation of economic or political gains by the recipients, the USSR pays a higher price—most notably in the "Third World," where regimes friendly to or allied with the USSR demand compensation for their solidarity in terms of economic concessions or political support in the international field.

Lastly, where the massive and intimidating presence of Soviet military force is felt, concessions are considered unnecessary. Consent is irrelevant; only submission is required. And if a given country which Moscow considers an integral part of its system threatens to break away (as Hungary did in 1956 or Czechoslovakia in 1968), the Soviet leadership has shown that it will go to the extreme length of military intervention to exact such submission.

At the same time, Moscow is not of course operating in a vacuum in these several types of power relationships. It is well aware that to push beyond certain limits (that is, spheres of tacitly recognized power or influence) is to risk provoking the reaction of other world powers, and first of all the United States. The possibility of miscalculation in this respect is always present. Over the years, however, the limits of tolerable actions have become more clearly defined, and the danger of major or irreparable errors on the part of the Soviet leadership has consequently decreased.

Summing up, there seems to be no reason to adopt a rigid interpretive approach to such a complex, changeable, and essentially fluid phenomenon as communism. Even if we choose to stick to a specific point of reference (the power and influence of the CPSU), it is necessary to recognize that the relationship between the Soviet elite and the mass it controls, inside and outside the frontiers of the state and the bloc, depends above all on the varying degrees of consent or submission that actually exist.

The Soviet leaders, for their part, will continue to seek to exercise the greatest possible power they can—with the least cost and risk to themselves. They may err in evaluating particular situations (it has

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happened more than once); but they certainly are clear about their basic goal, which is to dominate by persuasion or coercion. Monolithism is obviously their ideal; and indeed, to the extent possible, they seek to build their relations with the masses on that basis. But when that is not possible, they adjust to the situation and are satisfied with less—where necessary contenting themselves with a mere "Platonic" alliance with political forces they cannot control.

The secret of their success (using both terms loose · is precisely their ability to combine a rigid concept of power relations within the bloc and a highly flexible concept of relations with the outside world. It may seem curious that Communist parties and allies of the Soviet Union outside the immediate bloc ignore the fate of those within it and lose sight of the inexorable aim of all Moscow's actions—the enhancement of Soviet power. The fact is that these groups assess their own position in terms of the current international balance and are not much concerned about what would happen if that balance were to change. These are political calculations which have little to do with ideology and which are made by all parties and governments which hew to the Moscow line. The trouble is that their calculations may be wrong, in some cases because the parties concerned may turn out to be more dependent on Moscow than they had imagined, while others, in their timidity, may settle for less independence than they could assert against the claims of Moscow's power.

Leo Labedz:

Myths *vs.* Non-Myths

The main trouble with Mr. Ezergailis' article is that while he rightly deplores the tendency to fall for myths and oversimplifications about communism, some of his charges are imprecise, some are inconsistent, some are questionable, and some themselves smack of mythopoeic thinking.

First of all, even if one has a certain sympathy with his critical strictures, it is not clear what exactly are his targets. It would be easier to assess Mr. Ezergailis' points if he was more specific and at least illustrated his generalizations by concrete examples and references. As it is, one is not quite sure whether the views he criticizes as manifestations of the "myth of monolithic communism" or the "myth of crumbling communism" are those of John Doe or Adam Ulam, of Dr. Fred Schwartz or of Merle Fainsod, of Isaac Deutscher or of Leonard Schapiro. And who are the people "who did such an excellent job of exposing the myth of monolithic communism" and then later "themselves fell victim to the current myth of crumbling communism"? One can only guess, but it would prevent misunderstanding if one could know whom Mr. Ezergailis has in mind: Richard Lowenthal, Robert Conquest, or Uncle Tom Cobbler?

One may still agree with the general proposition that Western thinking about communism is often characterized by oversimplifications, and that these oversimplifications are, to some extent, a matter of political and intellectual fashion. Yet, to say this is something quite different from saying, as Mr. Ezergailis does, that they are elevated in the West "to the status of doctrine." There are indeed many Western misconceptions about communism, but none of them amounts to a "doctrine." One should not use the words "oversimplification," "myth" and "doctrine" as if they were synonymous. This makes the mystery even more obscure, for Mr. Ezergailis thus fails to indicate clearly not only whom he criticizes, but *what* is being criticized. Western misconceptions about communism will not be clarified through obscurity and confusion of terms.

In the literal sense, of course, communism was never "monolithic," even under Stalin. But serious commentators were never taken in by the Communists' ideological affirmations of the monolithic character of their movement. They recognized that monolithism was an ideological facade hiding a good deal of internal struggles. Nevertheless, the facade did exist, and it was preserved under Stalin, except for Tito's defiance. The official uniformity of the party line the world over and the doctrinal cohesion of the movement were two characteristic features which stood in striking contrast to the present polycentric Communist scene. Today there is no longer a unitary authority over communism. In that sense, it seems to me quite legitimate to speak of "the end of the monolith" simply as a vivid metaphorical way of describing the nature of the change that has taken place in the character of international communism since Stalin—the disappearance of the monolithic facade

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in the age of Communist polycentrism. The use of another term to indicate this change would not make much difference. Myth-makers can pervert any term for their purposes, and those who did not understand in the past the distinction between the monolithic facade and the underlying internal tensions will not understand today that the fact of polycentrism does not necessarily mean the weakening of individual Communist parties.

Mr. Ezergailis argues that "although Communists have occasionally attached the label 'monolithic' to their party, the term was hardly ever descriptive of the real essence of the movement." He also says that "the concept of a monolithic communism was unknown before World War II." Both statements are incorrect. In fact, the term began coming into use when the "bolshevization" of the Communist parties got under way in the early 1920's; and after these parties had also undergone "Stalinization"—still *before* World War II—it was used not just occasionally, but quite frequently. Monolithism had already become a basic institutional principle at the Tenth Party Congress in 1921, when Lenin prohibited factionalism in the party; and it acquired still greater status in Stalinist practice and mythology at least from the time of the Moscow Trials. These historical facts are quite elementary and cannot be altered or ignored to make them fit into some preconceived scheme.

Having given a "historical" explanation, Mr. Ezergailis supplements it by a "theoretical" one. "The myth of monolithic communism," he writes, ". . . goes back, in origin, to the character and the ideas of Lenin. . . ." This is followed by the assertion that "in a way communism could become monolithic in the ideological sense only if it abandoned Leninism. For the Leninist ideology contains within it many divergent currents that seem to be pulling in various directions at once. . . ." Even if the two statements are not necessarily inconsistent, they at least imply the existence of a "monolithic" strand in Leninism. Mr. Ezergailis rightly says that "Stalin sublimated and simplified the conflicting currents in the Leninist brand of Communist ideology." But this sublimation and simplification consisted precisely in an increased emphasis on the "monolithic" element and resulted in the exclusion of "the conflicting currents" pulling in other directions. In Stalinism "monolithism" became the explicit guiding ideal. In view of this, what are we to think of all the hue and cry about "the myth of monolithic communism" in Mr. Ezergailis' essay? And who, again, are the unnamed analysts he accuses of not having "raised the question of whether Leninism was monolithic?" He seems to imply that he is the first to have done it. But what is his own startling discovery—that Stalinism had its roots in Leninism? That's not exactly news.

Turning to post-Stalin developments, these have not signified a return to Leninism—Khrushchev's ideological claims to the contrary nothwithstanding—and Mr. Ezergailis displays a certain naiveté in taking such claims at face value. There is never a return to the *status quo ante*. But however one interprets post-Stalin developments, it does not make much sense to react against the mythopoeic or oversimplified interpretations of the previous period by tinkering with historical facts and by overlooking differences between the two phases. It is a mistake to disregard the role of "monolithic" strivings in shaping political reality just because, even under Stalin, they happen to have fallen short of the ideological goal. Even today, though the facts of polycentrism directly contradict the ideological claims deriving from these "monolithic" strivings of Communist parties, the ideological facade of monolithism has not disappeared altogether, but only some elements of it.

UNLIKE THE "myth of monolithic communism," that of "crumbling communism" appears to be Mr. Ezergailis' own creation. Only in his essay have I ever come across the expression "crumbling communism" (although the metaphor, the "crumbling monolith," has been used). Again, as he does not indicate who are the proponents of this "myth," it is impossible to know whom exactly he is attacking, or what are the real views of those he describes as believing "that communism is coming apart at the seams."

The expression "crumbling communism" can mean one of two things. It can mean the end of communism as a unitary movement; or it can mean a decline of the Communist regimes and parties leading to their ultimate collapse. It can mean both, but the two are analytically separable. One cannot postulate *a priori* that polycentrism must result in the downfall of the Communist parties and regimes. It differently affects the fate and chances of individual Communist parties: some of them gain by it, some of them lose.

To contend, as Mr. Ezergailis does, that the polycentric tendencies in the international Communist movement today are an overall source of strength for it is, in itself, an exercise in sheer mythology. Dialectical mysticism becomes a substitute for concrete analysis. Mr. Ezergailis suggests that "schism has somehow been at the very core of the movement's strength," that "schism and unity may simply be parts of the multi-faceted Leninist political and ideological dialectic." From this it follows that one should not

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"overrate the nature and extent of disagreements in the Communist world," and that "it would be a mistake to think that either China or the Soviet Union, or communism as such, have been weakened" by the Sino-Soviet schism; on the contrary, they "have gained new strength and new friends and allies as a consequence of the split."

If one were to accept the logic of Mr. Ezergailis' argument, it would mean that when Tito defected in 1948, Stalin, instead of organizing a series of trials designed to prevent any further schismatic tendencies in the Communist bloc, should have realized that he was thereby actually delaying the strengthening of the bloc. Or that when Khrushchev tried to prevent a final Sino-Soviet split by agreeing in 1960 to the compromise "Declaration of 81 Parties" in Moscow, he was in point of fact inadvertently preventing the strengthening of communism, whereas when he finally abandoned his attempts at compromise and planned to excommunicate the Chinese, he was, without knowing it, paving the way for both of them to gain "new strength and new friends and allies." Are these not examples of how Mr. Ezergailis' logic leads to a *reductio ad absurdum?*

History is, of course, full of paradoxes, but they do not fall into so neat a pattern as Mr. Ezergailis' "law" about Communist strength through schism implies. In those cases where there has in fact been an increase in Communist strength, is it not more logical to view it as having occurred *in spite*, not because, of the schisms?

Besides, political strength is a relative term and cannot be assessed otherwise than in relation to the strength of one's opponents. It is somewhat embarrassing to have to explain, for instance, that the balance of power is affected by the fact that the opponents may have conflicting interests of their own and may struggle among themselves. Mr. Ezergailis refers to the similarity between what *Pravda* was saying in 1924, and what it is saying today. He might usefully have pondered the importance which the Bolsheviks then and always have placed on the "internal contradictions among the imperialists." When such "internal contradictions" appear among Communists, would he have us dismiss them and disregard their relevance to the global balance of power, accepting instead some "demonological" or "dialectical" flight of fancy? If his diagnosis is correct, why is China so concerned about Soviet "collusion" with the US "imperialists," and Moscow about a Sino-American détente? And why is there so much apprehension in the West about a possible Sino-Soviet reconciliation? If one adopts Mr. Ezergailis' logic, such a reconciliation would actually lead to "ecumenic weakness" replacing (dialectically) the previous pattern of "strength through schism" in communism, and there would be no need to worry, whatever the prospects for such a reconciliation might be.

Instead of an analysis of complex political developments, Mr. Ezergailis seems to have adopted here a simple Manichean vision of the Children of Darkness gaining the upper hand over the Children of Light. I happen to believe in the defense of the West and resistance to communism, but that does not mean that one should overlook the processes and events which have occurred in communism or treat it ahistorically as an undifferentiated mass. This kind of approach led many observers in the past to a biased perception of the Sino-Soviet conflict; and it leads Mr. Ezergailis to the denial of its significance, now that its existence can be denied no longer. Political wisdom, as Aristotle pointed out, consists in the ability to make relevant distinctions. The Communists' strength does not derive from their schisms, but most often from the weaknesses of their opponents. In this respect it is legitimate to have serious apprehensions about Western understanding of communism, Western policies towards it, and Western political stamina. The point is not that schisms strengthen the Communist powers, but that the West, through confusion and lack of political will, fails to benefit from them.

But the confusion will only be worse confounded if, on top of the existing misconceptions, one has to deal with such fantasies as Mr. Ezergailis' unfounded and somewhat inconsistent allegations that it was "the myth of 'crumbling communism'" which "was responsible for the kind of US involvement that developed in Vietnam," but that "many who today are advocating US withdrawal from Vietnam may, in a subconscious and unanalyzed fashion, believe in monolithic communism." It is difficult enough to explain foreign policy in a democratic country without the analysts having to undergo psychoanalysis at a distance. Whatever the faults of US policy in Vietnam, and whatever the beliefs of those who advocate US withdrawal from that country, neither has much to do with Mr. Ezergailis' myths; either "myth" can be used to justify either policy. Indeed, it would be more logical to argue that it was not "the myth of crumbling communism" that led to US involvement in Vietnam, but rather Mr. Ezergailis' opposite myth—that of "monolithic communism"—which, as he says elsewhere, "led the US to overcommit its resources in the cold war" and "caused Western observers and statesmen to be unduly nervous and to overreact to the Communist challenge." As a matter of fact, the

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analytical framework provided by Mr. Ezergailis is itself mythopoeic, and US foreign policy cannot be logically or factually explained within it.

The second possible meaning of Mr. Ezergailis' "myth of crumbling communism," as stated earlier, is that which postulates the decline and eventual collapse of Communist regimes. There are, of course, some analysts who believe in this thesis, but that does not amount to the existence of a myth. In the discussion on the future of the Soviet regime in this journal (reproduced in *Dilemmas of Change in Soviet Politics*, edited by Zbigniew Brzezinski, New York, Columbia University Press, 1969), the "collapse thesis" of Michel Garder found few supporters. A similar discussion in *Survey* (Summer and Autumn issues, 1969) reflected no less cautious attitudes among the Western analysts who took part in it. The only exception was the essay "Will the USSR Survive until 1984?," by Andrei Amalrik, but this was a view which came from the East, not the West.

There is, indeed, something about communism that fosters myth-making. This is also true about those who set out to dispel the myths and end up by creating new ones, as Mr. Ezergailis does.

IN REPLY

Andrew Ezergailis

In writing the essay which initiated this symposium, my purpose was not to tell the final truth about communism. I had no intention of warning the West about communism, as Mr. Griffitth assumes. My intention was rather—as Mr. Tatu put it—"to poke holes in . . . rivals' theories." In other words, the essay was simply negative in purpose.

The question of whether or not my argument has any validity rests on the simple question: When did monolithic communism exist? There is a general and a selective usage of the term "monolithic." When it is used selectively, it may signify that there was ideological agreement among a great variety of Communists—or, as Mr. Mehnert would call it, monodoxy. Or, in another selective sense, the word may be used as a synonym for centralism. But the general usage of the term is one in which these distinctions are not made—that is, the ideological and organizational aspects are not separated. I simply do not see that communism has ever been monolithic either in any of selective senses of the term or in the general sense. To say, as some of the commentators did, that communism is monolithic in some senses but crumbling in others is simply to say that it is not monolithic.

What does this have to do with crumbling communism? The amazing fact about current opinion-making on communism is that the ghost of monolithic communism is resurrected every time a new book comes out describing communism as crumbling. Mr. Morris' work, *International Communism and American Policy*, is a case in point. Some of the other participants in the symposium have also published books about which this generalization can be made. I argued in my essay that the proponents of the crumbling-communism thesis set up a straw man in assuming that monolithic communism ever existed. Those who talked about communism as monolithic fabricated a false abstraction, and those who have jumped on the bandwagon of crumbling communism have compounded the error.

The process that has been described as disintegrating or crumbling communism has in reality encompassed two processes that have nothing in common. One has involved the expansion and stabilization of communism, as in China, Albania, and perhaps Yugoslavia; and the other has been the emergence of movements of protest against communism, as in Hungary in 1956 and Czechoslovakia in 1968.

A number of the commentators assailed me for making a wrong causal connection between the belief in crumbling communism and American involvement in Vietnam. I have no quarrel with Mr. Treadgold about the real causes of the American involvement, but I am sure he is aware of the theory currently being advanced in both scholarly and journalistic circles

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that American policy-makers obsessed with monolithic communism were to blame. Mr. Morris' book may be cited as one example. What I am contending is that if either of the two myths about communism has been responsible for the kind of involvement we have in Vietnam, it is the myth of crumbling communism. For every believer in monolithic communism in the cabinets of Presidents Kennedy and Johnson, one could easily name five believers in crumbling communism.

In offering the observation that communism in China might very well become stronger as a consequence of the turmoil of the Cultural Revolution, I simply wanted to dramatize the difficulty of making predictions about communism—a point to which Mr. Seton-Watson alluded with real understanding. The number of informed observers who since 1917 have predicted the imminent fall of the Soviet regime has perhaps run by now into the thousands. They have in most cases been clear-headed men, and each has grounded his prediction in what he thought were objective observations about the Soviet order. Among those who have seen their predictions proven wrong have been the top officials of the German Foreign Office in 1918-19 and again in 1941, and almost the whole Western press corps during the Civil War period. If Mr. Griffith wants to find a really meaningful historical analogy, he should point to the schismatism in the Protestant movement. The splintering of the core of Protestantism did not prevent it from flourishing.

Mr. Szamuely was perhaps the most exasperated of the respondents. If I understand him correctly, he would like to see developments in Eastern Europe analyzed solely in terms of the exercise of power politics by the Soviet state. I have a great deal of respect for that kind of argument, but I do not think that such a theory accounts for the uniqueness of the Soviet state. The problem we face in dealing with the Soviet state and its empire in Eastern Europe is to account for the historical novelty of the situation.

If I were to rewrite my essay, I would delete the sentence about Isaac Deutscher. Not that I was necessarily wrong, but I do not know enough about Deutscher's personal life to defend my point. I would also clarify my statement about "Sunday Communists." I agree with Mr. Treadgold that comparisons between communism and religion should be drawn very carefully, if at all. I would still contend, however, that one cannot be a Sunday Communist (though one can, of course, be a careerist—this is, indeed, an old story about Communist party members). What I mean to say is that a Communist's loss of faith cannot be partial. A Christian can take a lifetime to lose his faith altogether; he may lose it once and then get it back again. For a Communist it may take a matter of years, but once he loses his faith, I would maintain that the loss is total and permanent. If Mr. Treadgold knows of anyone who has renounced communism part-way, I would like to hear about it. The kind of person he has in mind, I think, could only be someone who never pursued communism as a vocation.

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Et Resurrexerunt: How Writers Rise from the Dead

By Hugh McLean

EDITORS' NOTE: The following article constitutes an enlarged and updated version of a study that first appeared in the May-June 1963 issue of this journal. Since many of our present-day readers may be expected not to have read it, we have asked Mr. McLean to provide us with a new version, combining the most important data from the earlier article with the most recent examples of literary rehabilitation in the USSR.

Of all the savage features of Stalin's rule, one of the most terrible was the institution that George Orwell aptly labeled the "memory hole"—the practice of officially obliterating human beings and their works not only from life, but from recorded history, the collective memory of society.* To undertake to erase people's names from history, to decree, as it were, that they never existed at all—such a proceeding seems to take us out of the world of human reality altogether, into the realm of the supernatural. It is as if the implacable tyrant, not content with defaming, banishing, or executing, finally arrogated to himself divine powers. Like Milton's Almighty, he sought to strip those who offended him of their very identity and historical reality:

. . . of their names in Heavenly records now
Be no memorial, blotted and rased
By their rebellion from the Books of Life.

Fortunately, while nations may temporarily be caught up in the private pathology of their leaders, they do seem to possess a kind of latent balancing mechanism which eventually asserts itself and brings about a turn back toward "health," a reversion to something approaching common sense and normality. Although, of course, it had other, more immediate political causes, Khrushchev's destalinization campaign may be regarded as something of this sort, an indication of the recovery of Soviet society—perhaps only partial—from Stalin's mental illness.

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* I would like to express gratitude to Patricia Blake, Gleb Struve, and Arkady Belinkov for providing information and suggesting improvements in this article.

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One of the most notable indications of this return to normality has been the "rehabilitation," usually posthumous, alas, of many of Stalin's victims. Not only have the gates of the labor camps been flung open and many long immured wretches allowed to emerge into the "land where man so freely breathes," but a great many of those who perished have been posthumously cleansed of blemish and restored to moral citizenship. Most of the vast number of administrative sentences meted out by the secret police in Stalin's day have been officially annulled, declared "inconsonant with socialist legality." Furthermore, the "memory hole" itself seems to have been virtually abolished. It is now possible to mention in print (though not necessarily favorably) almost any name at all, no matter how fearful the curse it once bore—even some, like Lev Kamenev and Nikolai Bukharin, who have by no means been "rehabilitated."

This "operation resurrection" has been particularly spectacular in the sphere of literature. Large numbers of writers, critics, and scholars incarcerated or killed in Stalin's time have been restored to literary life. The ban has also been lifted from the work of many others who did not themselves suffer physical persecution. Collectively, these rehabilitations undoubtedly constitute, in artistic and intellectual importance, a more significant cultural "thaw" than most of the original "thaw" literature produced by living writers.

The Abjured

The theory and practice of post-Stalinist resurrection can best be understood in terms of the various categories of Stalinist oblivion to which it is counterposed. For under Stalin oblivion was not imposed equally and indiscriminately upon all offenders but was rather assigned in varying degrees to different classes of undesirables. The Stalinist memory hole led to three different "circles" in historical limbo, with certain minor gradations marked out within each circle. (Of course, these circles and others were inhabited by a great variety of people, but here only their literary population is considered.)

In the first or outer circle sat the Abjured, a rather large group of writers from various periods whose works and ideals were considered sufficiently alien and immoral to be injurious to the tender minds of Soviet youth and disruptive to the tranquility of Soviet society. These unfortunates were branded with such derogatory labels as "reactionary," "anti-popular," "decadent," "mystical," "obscurantist," and the like. They included many types—people who in prerevolutionary times had expressed antirevolutionary or specifically anti-Bolshevik convictions, people in whose system of beliefs religion played too vital and central a role; people who seemed "Bohemian" or advocated anything resembling "art for art's sake," and so forth. Such people and their works were "discommended"—not exactly forbidden, but not recommended and not disseminated. It was permissible to mention their names provided one included the necessary disclaimers. But they had to be decisively abjured.

This first circle had a large historical sweep, reaching back into the 19th century to include such figures as Dostoevsky, Grigoriev, Leskov, and Leontiev, whose works, if published at all in the Stalinist period, came out only in carefully "selected" editions with safely orthodox introductions designed to warn the faithful against any errors they might unwittingly absorb. The range of abjuration for the early 20th century became broader still, taking in practically the whole Decadent and Symbolist generations, in other words, almost the whole of Russian literature between 1895 and 1917, with the exception of the "realist" school. Among the Symbolists, Briusov and Blok were also partially excepted—Briusov because he had the wisdom to become a Communist after 1917, and Blok because he was too "big" to be wasted and more could be forgiven him. And in his own odd way, he had welcomed the Revolution.

Besides these repudiated figures from the past, the Abjured also included a few alien bodies who lived on into the Soviet period but never became in any sense "Soviet," never accommodated themselves to Soviet demands on literature. They went their own way, at the most occasionally writing something "correct" in order to appease the authorities, but essentially remaining themselves. Boris Pasternak was one of them, also Anna Akhmatova, Mikhail Zoshchenko, Mikhail Bulgakov, and some older figures like Fiodor Sologub, Maksimilian Voloshin, Mikhail Kuzmin, and Andrei Bely. Despite their nonconformism, these abjured writers of the Soviet period, unlike some of their colleagues, were never subjected to police persecution. They were condemned to silence for long periods and frequently attacked verbally in the strongest terms, but they remained "extant"; and their names never became so taboo that they could not be mentioned in print.

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The Accursed

The second circle of the Stalinist limbo belonged to the Accursed. To be relegated to this degree of outer darkness one must not only have professed an alien ideology. There had to be some fairly open act of defiance, even if a passive one—a refusal to bend the knee to the Communist idols. One had to be not just a heretic but a rebel. For such crimes offenders were marked with the Curse, which carried with it a variety of unpleasant experiences in this world, often including elimination from it, and total erasure from the pages of history as well. One became an "unperson" who had never existed.

Among the Accursed were such people as Boris Pilniak, Isaak Babel, Yevgeni Zamiatin, and Yuri Olesha, all of them once leading lights in Soviet prose fiction. Pilniak's guilt lay in his heretical interpretation of the Revolution as a wild, "elemental" mass upheaval which had at least temporarily restored Russia to the peasant primitivism of pre-Petrine times. Though more or less tolerated, with scoldings, in the 1920's, such a heresy became unspeakable in Stalin's day. Furthermore, Pilniak had made the dangerously frank admission that he was "far less interested in the fate of the Russian Communist Party than in the fate of Russia."[1] Hard-pressed by the authorities from the late 1920's on, he was finally arrested and "obliterated" around 1937.

Isaak Babel similarly tended toward the "elemental" heresy in his view of the Revolution. Inquisitive and fearless, with an artistic talent far greater than Pilniak's, he was also slyer, more "hidden," more ambiguous; it would be hard to deduce an ideology from Babel's work, and he certainly never made such obviously self-incriminating statements as Pilniak's. Nevertheless, after publishing less and less in the 1930's, he "disappeared" in 1939. Perhaps other factors also contributed to his fate: Ilia Ehrenburg mentions that he was a friend of the wife of NKVD chief Yezhov, a connection which may have ultimately contributed to his downfall.[2]

Another victim of the Curse was Yevgeni Zamiatin. Author of the famous "counterrevolutionary" novel *We* (never published in the USSR), he had made "un-Soviet" statements even more forthright than Pilniak's. Even in the early 1920's, which seem so tolerant by Stalinist standards, Zamiatin discerned a fateful tendency toward rigid dogmatism in Russian intellectual life and prophesied its baneful effects:

I am afraid we will have no real literature until we cure ourselves of this strange new Catholicism which is no less afraid than the old one of the slightest heretical word. And if this illness is incurable, I am afraid that the only future of Russian literature is its past.[3]

At first Zamiatin managed to maintain his independence, but once RAPP (the Russian Association of Proletarian Writers) began to tighten the ideological screws in the late 1920's, he found it impossible to publish. He finally got permission to emigrate, and lived in Paris until his death in 1937. While he was thus uniquely fortunate compared to those of the Accursed caught in the terror, he was nevertheless consigned to oblivion as a writer.

Yuri Olesha was another interesting and promising Soviet novelist of the 1920's. His heresy, though he hedged it with ambiguity and self-deprecation, was a grave one. He raised the basic question whether the human personality could find adequate fulfillment in striving for the collective goals of communism, or whether, on the contrary, the Communist system constricted and "mechanized" it, stifling the feelings which once "constituted the soul of man"—"compassion, tenderness, pride, zeal, and love." Posing as an unreconstructed old-style intellectual, Olesha debated this and other difficult questions for several years, ostensibly putting the blame on himself for being out of step with the age. But the issues he raised were too grave and his expression of them too poignant to be tolerated very long in the Stalinist era. For some reason his fate was milder than Pilniak's or Babel's; though he virtually ceased to be published or mentioned after 1938, he was never arrested. He was, however, reduced to poverty and, according to reports, became a hopeless alcoholic. In the post-Stalin era he produced nothing of interest except some fragmentary notebooks.[4]

Russian poetry perhaps suffered even more grievously than prose at the hands of Stalin's professional obliterators. The years 1921 to 1930 wit-

[1] Quoted from *Istoriia russkoi sovetskoi literatury*, Vol. I, Moscow, 1958, p. 57; originally in *Pisateli ob iskusstve i o sebe*, Moscow-Leningrad, 1924.

[2] I. Ehrenburg, "Liudy, gody, zhizn," *Novyi mir* (Moscow), No. 5, 1962, p. 152.

[3] Zamiatin, "Ia boius," *Dom iskusstv* (Petrograd), No. I, 1921; quoted from Zamiatin, *Litsa*, New York, 1955, pp. 189-90.

[4] Published in part in *Izbrannoe*, Moscow, 1965, and more fully under the title *Ni dnia bez strochki*, Moscow, 1956.

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nessed the tragic extinction of many irreplaceable talents: Gumiliov (by execution), Blok and Khlebnikov (by premature death), Yesenin and Maiakovsky (by suicide). But in the 1930's the state assumed a more active role in the annihilation of Russian poetry. The unspeakable treatment of Osip Mandelshtam—hounded, arrested, exiled, re-arrested, driven insane, and finally left to die on a garbage heap in Vladivostok—stands out as one of the most atrocious crimes of the Stalin era. But there were many more. A whole school of "peasant" poets—*i.e.*, poets of peasant origin who drew their inspiration from rural experience and folk-cultural traditions—was "liquidated" in the early 1930's along with their supposed social base, the kulaks. Three of the most talented among them were Nikolai Kliuev, arrested and banished to Siberia, where he died of a heart attack in 1937; and Sergei Klychkov (1889-1940) and Piotr Oreshin (1887-1943), both of whom apparently died as slave laborers in concentration camps.

Other poets among the Accursed included Benedikt Livschitz (1886-1939), one of the early Futurists, who had been a comrade-in-arms of Khlebnikov, the Burliuks, and Maiakovsky in their pre-revolutionary battles with the philistines. He continued to publish original poetry in the 1920's [5] but in the 1930's, like Pasternak and many others, had to resort to translating; he also published an interesting book of memoirs.[6] Abstention from original poetry did not, however, save Livschitz from arrest and erasure. A similar fate befell Blok's friend Wilhelm Sorgenfrei (1882-1938), mainly known as a translator from French and German, but author of one published volume of original verse, *Holy Saturday;* [7] as the distinguished literary historian Ivanov-Razumnik has pointed out, just having a foreign name was enough to bring about arrest and imprisonment for "espionage" in the Yezhov era.[8]

Another victim was Nikolai Zabolotsky, one of the most original and interesting poets to emerge in the late 1920's. After 1930 Zabolotsky tried to modify his surrealist style in the direction of "socialist realism" and to provide his work with acceptable ideological content, but his efforts were for naught. Arrested in 1937, he was among the few who did not perish in the camps; however, his talent never recovered its erstwhile brilliance, and in the postwar era he, too, took refuge in translating.

The Damned

Finally, the innermost circle of the Stalinist limbo was occupied by the Damned. The Damned were by no means exponents of an alien ideology. On the contrary, they were numbered among the true believers—they were Communists. But despite superhuman efforts to obey the all-wise party, they nevertheless fell by the wayside and were swept into the memory hole.

Although all were alike in their basic Communist ideology, the literary Damned were a rather heterogeneous lot. Among them were Aleksandr Voronsky and Viacheslav Polonsky, "liberal" editors and critics of the 1920's who had advocated a literary policy of relative ideological tolerance. During the screw-tightening RAPP period, both were deprived of their editorial positions and made to recant their errors; Polonsky died a natural death in 1932, while Voronsky was "erased" in 1937 (he died, presumably in a camp, in 1943). Another "liberal" Communist was the critic Abram Lezhnev, who had fought the RAPP-ites on literary policy, insisting that sincerity and artistic quality were more important than ideological correctness; he, too, disappeared in the purges.

Curiously enough, the most rabid enemies of these "liberal" Communists also found their way into the circle of the Damned. These were the original RAPP-ites, the militant advocates of proletarian "hegemony" in literature, who were known as the "left" RAPP or "RAPP opposition" after 1925. Among them were two literary critics of some note, G. Lelevich (1901-45) and Georgi Gorbachov (1897-1942), who were purged in the early 1930's, probably not so much for their literary views as for their association with the Left Opposition in the party. They were among the earliest candidates for the memory hole: the "L" volume of the *Literary Encyclopedia*, published in 1932, does not mention Lelevich.

By a further irony, several of the "orthodox" RAPP-ites, who triumphed over the "Left" in 1925 and from 1928 to 1932 were permitted to ride herd over the whole territory of Soviet literature, were cut down in their turn after 1932 and eventually

[5] *Iz topi blat*, Petrograd, 1922; *Patmos*, Leningrad, 1926; *Krontonskii polden*, Leningrad, 1928.
[6] *Polutoraglazyi strelets*, Leningrad, 1933.
[7] *Strastnaia subbota*, Petrograd, 1922.
[8] R. V. Ivanov-Razumnik, *Tiurmy i ssylki*, New York, 1953, p. 341.

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arrested and packed off to the Circle of the Damned. One of them was the mighty Leopold Averbakh, chief of RAPP and at one time virtual dictator of Soviet literature. Others were the RAPP secretary, Vladimir Kirshon, also a dramatist of some talent; the poet Dmitri Maznin; and the critic Aleksei Selivanovsky. They all vanished in the late 1930's. Their crime was hardly ideological: it was rather that they had once constituted an independent center of power, somewhat outside the party hierarchy, and had made some attempt to defy the Central Committee's liquidation of RAPP in 1932. Averbakh also had the misfortune to be the brother-in-law of Genrikh Yagoda, the GPU chief deposed in 1936 and publicly tried and shot in 1938.

The Damned also included many representatives of the interesting postrevolutionary literary faction headed by Valerian Pereverzev, possibly the most original (besides Plekhanov) of the Russian intellectuals who tried systematically to apply the ideas of Marx to the study of literature. Pereverzev had distinguished credentials as a revolutionary, though unfortunately as a Menshevik rather than a Bolshevik. Nevertheless he had many Communists among his followers, and for several years after the Revolution he was revered as a vigorous and incisive spokesman for the official creed as it applied to literature. Around 1929, he was suddenly found guilty of a heresy called "vulgar sociologism" and was subjected to a two-year campaign of denunciation by the RAPP-ites and the press.[9] Eventually he was arrested (1938), but managed to survive his years in prison. Most of his colleagues also survived, but the movement as such was obliterated.

Aside from the above more or less categorizable literary factions, the Damned also included many individuals whose persecution seems particularly ironic. One was Mikhail Koltsov, a talented writer, an editor of *Pravda*, and a loyal Stalinist, who was nonetheless arrested and "erased" upon his return from a journalistic assignment in Spain. Another was Viktor Kin, author of the popular Civil War novel *On the Other Side* (1928) and later TASS correspondent in Italy and France, who disappeared from life and history in 1937.

Other victims—all loyal revolutionaries who had gained prominence variously as novelists, short story writers, or dramatists—included: Artiom Vesioly (1899-1939), Ivan Kataev (1902-1939), Aleksandr Tarasov-Rodionov (1885-1938), and Sergei Tretiakov (1892-1939). Notable among the fallen Communists was the great theater director, Vsevolod Meierhold, first humiliated and then "erased" in the late 1930's. Finally, several of the most prominent "proletarian" poets, once held up as examples of that "celestial fire" of talent which had lain smoldering in the prerevolutionary working class, were also eliminated, including: Aleksei Gastev (1882-1941), Mikhail Gerasimov (1889-1939), Vladimir Kirillov (1890-1943), and Vasily Kniazev (1887-1937). No less vulnerable were a number of Komsomol and RAPP poets, most notably Pavel Vasiliev (1910-37) and Boris Kornilov (1907-38). The list goes on and on, serving to show that loyalty to the cause, working-class origin, a revolutionary past, or a *partbilet* carried no guarantee of survival in the years of terror.

The Post-Stalin Setting

One of the curious contradictions of Stalinism was its inability to face the consequences of its own acts. It was obvious that with such a large number of its writers and critics officially reduced to nonbeing, the history of Soviet literature had come to an end—or more correctly, the history limped on, but it was impossible to write about it. No matter how sycophantically willing the scholar, it seemed impossible—and also dangerous—to undertake a job of falsification and distortion of such magnitude as to write, during Stalin's lifetime, an official history of Soviet literature. It is a striking fact that not a single solid work on the subject appeared in Russia between the last edition of Gorbachov's *Contemporary Russian Literature* (1931) [10] and the first post-Stalin attempt at "sketches" (sketchy they were, to be sure) for a history of Soviet Russian literature.[11] In the postwar period the only widely available source on Soviet Russian literature was an official textbook by Professor L. Timofeev, endlessly reprinted for school use.[12] But Timofeev's book made no pretense at being a history or even presenting its material historically; it simply filled

[9] *Literaturnaia entsiklopedia*, Vol. VIII, 1932, printed an extensive bibliography listing the works of Pereverzev and his followers, as well as the published attacks against them.

[10] G. Gorbachov, *Sovremennaia russkaia literatura*, Leningrad, 1931.

[11] *Ocherki istorii russkoi sovetskoi literatury*, Vol. I, Moscow, 1954. See Gleb Struve, "Dead Souls and Living Reputations: Reassessing the Past of Soviet Literature," *Soviet Survey* (London), January-March 1958, pp. 12-13.

[12] L. Timofeev, *Sovremennaia literatura*, Moscow, 1946; later editions have the title *Russkaia sovetskaia literatura*.

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up its space with two gigantic chapters on the safely dead and officially canonized patron saints of Soviet literature, Gorky and Maiakovsky, with shorter chapters on some lesser—but officially certified—literary luminaries like A. N. Tolstoi, Fadeev, and Sholokhov. Hardly worth mention is a 1943 work produced by Tolstoi himself—a very un-historical "history" of Soviet literature which was originally given as a speech celebrating the 25th anniversary of the Revolution, and which carefully avoided mentioning any forbidden names.[13]

With Stalin's death the process of restoration of history could begin, and with it the resurrection of the nameless. The "sketches" mentioned above were among the first signs of "thaw" in the historiography of Soviet literature. Though still wholly Stalinist in doctrine, their very existence was a sign of change: at least they essayed a historical view of the literary past. But no resurrections were as yet attempted, and none of the Accursed or the Damned were mentioned.

It was, of course, the celebrated 20th Party Congress of 1956 and the even more celebrated "secret speech" by Khrushchev which really gave impetus to the process of resurrection. This speech knocked out some of the main, weight-bearing pillars from under the old Stalinist structure: without specifying clearly just what the limits of official "revision" would be, it raised the question whether there need be any limits at all. As Dostoevsky said, if there is no God, then all is permitted; if you can criticize Stalin, you can criticize anything. Dogma became mere hypothesis. Thus the whole rigid structure was loosened up, and there was no way of knowing just where it would sag further. How far would Khrushchev and his cohorts push matters, or allow them to be pushed?

Insofar as literature is concerned, the answer to this question has emerged piecemeal. Since 1956, the Soviet literary world has been pretty clearly divided into two camps—liberals and conservatives—which have continuously engaged in more or less open warfare. The party leaders have periodically endorsed one position or the other, veering back and forth with the winds of political expediency. To be sure, in their basic spiritual affinities, the bosses are much closer to the conservatives. The essential conservative position is the dogma of "art for the party's sake": the function of literature is to engineer Soviet souls according to party specifications, to preach the party's sermon and then preach it again. Such an attitude could hardly help finding favor in the eyes of the party's gods.

Nevertheless, at times the leaders have sided with the Liberals. For one thing, the bosses may have been dimly aware that the conservative sermon, correct as it might be, was falling on deaf ears. The supply of real literary talent was sparse indeed in the conservative camp; and besides, people had heard the sermon before and were sick of it. If Soviet literature was to be an effective instrument of party propaganda, it needed to draw upon the real resources of talent in the country; and these, alas, were almost all on the other side.

But most of all, the post-Stalin leaders, and Khrushchev in particular, understood very well that "destalinization" was an enormously potent political force—dangerous, no doubt, but usable. It might help to solve some pressing social and economic problems, and it also might be effectively turned against one's own political enemies within the party. Literature was one of its instrumentalities. It now seems clear that Khrushchev's imprimatur for the publication in 1962 of Solzhenitsyn's *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*, as of Yevtushenko's "The Heirs of Stalin," was an effort to discredit his enemies and enlist support in his embittered struggle with the Kozlov faction in the Central Committee.[14]

On the other hand, Khrushchev was always deeply uneasy about where destalinization in general, and "liberal" literary and artistic trends in particular, might lead; and indeed the Hungarian revolt of 1956 had given him good reason to be fearful. As Khrushchev saw it, loosen the reins, and people, especially intellectuals, start galloping off in the direction of all sorts of heresies, whether "bourgeois" democracy or "real" Marxism or religion. So he was ever prepared to call on his conservative friends to clean up the mess.[15]

Khrushchev's successors have tended to follow the same oscillating pattern, except that in recent

[13] A. N. Tolstoi, *Chetvert veka sovetskoi literatury; doklad na iubileinoi sessii Akademii Nauk SSSR 18 noiabria 1942 goda*, Moscow, 1943.

[14] For a detailed treatment of this subject, see Priscilla Johnson, "The Regime and the Intellectuals: A Window on Party Politics," *Problems of Communism*, Special Supplement, July-August 1963.

[15] For many of these ideas I am particularly indebted to Patricia Blake's discerning articles: "Freedom and Control in Literature," in Alexander Dallin and Alan F. Westin, Eds., *Politics in the Soviet Union*, New York, Harcourt, Brace & World, 1966; and "This is the Winter of Moscow's Dissent," *New York Times Magazine*, March 24, 1968.

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years the impetus toward liberalization has been severely circumscribed. The liberals have been permitted to function—at least until very recently—but the party has made it increasingly clear that it favors such conservative stalwarts as N. Kochetov, whose recent novel, *What Is It You Want?*, goes farther than any other literary work in rehabilitating Stalin and his system.[16] The strength of the liberals has also been severely curtailed by the crackdown on radical "underground" writers and the trials of Siniavsky, Daniel, Ginzburg, *et al.*, as well as by the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia. As all of these developments have shown, "revisionism" rouses enormous fears in the pudgy breasts of the bureaucrats, and the temptation to resort to repressive measures is correspondingly great.

As might be expected, the resurrection of the literary dead has tended to speed up or slow down in pace with the whole process of destalinization—or more recently "restalinization." The liberals, of course, have been the chief agents of resurrection. The revived literary ghosts have represented valuable allies for them, demonstrating that Soviet literature once offered other alternatives than the official stereotypes—often alternatives of great artistic power and vitality. The liberals have felt that the works of these ghosts, if once again propagated, would be a broadening and enriching influence on Soviet literary life. Furthermore, many of the liberals have been bound to these ghosts by ties of literary admiration, and often personal acquaintance and affection as well. Thus the work of resurrection frequently has been a labor of love, the bringing back to life (at least literary life) of an admired colleague.

On the other hand, even the conservatives have been obliged to take some part in the process of resurrection. The Gorky Institute of World Literature has since 1956 produced two compendious histories of Soviet Russian literature. The first, in three massive volumes, appeared between 1958 and 1961; an even more bulky edition, in four volumes, is now in progress. Both these works are clearly "conservative" in spirit and dwell as little as possible on the evils of the "cult of personality." They may be "bad" history—biased, tendentious, patronizing, dull, and even dishonest; but at least they are histories. Practically all the erased names have been inked in again; the nameless ghosts can be identified.[17]

Rescues from the Outer Circle

In general, the manner, speed and quality of resurrection in the post-Stalin era have depended on the circle of limbo in which the given ghost sat under Stalin.

The Abjured have fared rather well, although not uniformly. By and large, the earlier and "bigger" the writer, the better he has been treated. Practically all the 19th-century writers, especially if they could be labeled "realists," have been claimed once again as part of the national heritage. To show the contrast with Stalinist times: in 1948 A. S. Dolinin, a distinguished Dostoevsky scholar, was compelled to abjure Dostoevsky publicly and to promise that henceforth he would study only approved revolutionary democrats like Dobroliubov[18]; eight years later, in 1956, Dolinin was selected as one of the editors of a 10-volume edition of Dostoevsky, the first "complete" edition (excluding only the *Diary of a Writer)* to be published since the late 1920's.[19] Similarly, an 11-volume edition of Leskov was put out in 1956-58—also not quite complete, but containing several works not reprinted since the Revolution.[20] A volume of Apollon Grigoriev's poetry has been published, and more recently a volume of his criticism.[21] The latter in particular seems to signify a new pluralism and relativism in Soviet literary thinking. Grigoriev vigorously dissented from the approved doctrines of Chernyshevsky, Dobroliubov & Co., but it is now acknowledged that his criticism, however mistaken in its general principles, may offer revealing insights.

Among the Symbolists, the resuscitation process has worked more unevenly. Briusov and Blok had always been permitted, with "risky" spots kept to a minimum; now much more extensive editions of

[16] For a review of this novel, see *Atlas* (New York), February 1970, p. 64.

[17] *Istoriia russkoi sovetskoi literatury*, Vols. I-III, Moscow, 1956-61; *Istoriia russkoi sovetskoi literatury*, 2nd revised ed., Moscow, 1967.

[18] *Cf.* Gleb Struve, "The Soviets Purge Literary Scholarship," *The New Leader* (New York), April 2, 1949.

[19] F. M. Dostoevky, *Sobranie sochinenii*, 10 vols., Moscow, 1956-58.

[20] N. S. Leskov, *Sobranie sochinenii*, 11 vols., Moscow, 1956-58.

[21] A. Grigoriev, *Izbrannye proizvedeniia*, Leningrad, 1959; *Literaturnaia kritika*, B. F. Yegorov, ed., Moscow, 1967. *Cf.* review of latter by A. Marchin in *Voprosy literatury* (Moscow), No. 4, 1968, p. 216.

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both have become possible.[22] Innokenti Annensky has been reprinted.[23] Even Vladimir Soloviov, the Symbolists' spiritual forefather, hitherto a forbidden figure in the USSR, has made a modest comeback with a few poems in anthologies, and a whole volume of his poetry has been announced by the "Poet's Library" series.[24] Similarly, Andrei Bely has reappeared on the Soviet book market with a large volume of verse in the same series, though his novels and memoirs remain under the ban.[25]

On the other hand, many of the Symbolist generation are still abjured. The émigrés Merezhkovsky, Gippius, and Viacheslav Ivanov are still blacked out, although a whole volume of Balmont—the most vacuous and therefore innocuous of the Symbolist émigrés—has at last appeared in the Poet's Library.[26] The "inner émigré" Fiodor Sologub is still considered very dubious; however, a volume of his verse has also been announced by the "Poet's Library,"[27] and his great novel, *The Petty Demon*, has had one obscure provincial reprinting.[28]

Among the post-Symbolist Abjured, Gumiliov remains virtually outlawed as an avowedly anti-Soviet conspirator, executed by the Cheka in 1921; but clandestine (mimeographed) editions of his works are said to circulate widely, and a few poems have been included in anthologies. Akhmatova, in her last years, was finally able to enjoy not only tranquility and freedom from objurgation, but even a great deal of recognition, both at home and abroad. Book-length editions of her poetry were published in 1958, 1961, and 1965,[29] each one larger than the preceding, and much more of her work has appeared in magazines. She was permitted to travel to England and Italy to receive honors; and on her death in 1966 the obituary notices were respectful and laudatory (the name of her persecutor, Andrei Zhdanov, was conspicuously avoided).[30] Nevertheless, "Requiem," one of the greatest works of Akhmatova's last years, has not yet been published in the USSR.[31]

Zoshchenko, another victim of Zhdanov's wrath, has also been rehabilitated—but quietly, and apparently without official sponsorship. Since his works earlier enjoyed a mass popularity equalled by hardly any other Soviet writer, it is possible the publishing houses simply sought to reprint them for profit, sounding out the reaction in official quarters in advance. Between 1956 and 1966 several editions of his selected works appeared, but without introductions or apologias. Moreover, the choice of works for republication was tendentious, emphasizing his ideologically more acceptable—and artistically inferior—work of the 1930's; and even so, some of the texts were abridged and altered. In 1968 there finally appeared a substantial two-volume edition of Zoshchenko with a respectable, and respectful, introduction by Pavel Gromov, himself a very reputable literary scholar. It included several items not published since the 1930's and restored some of the passages censored in earlier editions. But Zoshchenko's last major work, *Before Sunrise*, the publication of which was forcibly broken off in 1943, has still not been printed.[32]

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[22] V. Briusov, *Stikhotvoreniia*, 2 vols., Moscow, 1955; *Izbrannie sochineniia*, Leningrad, 1959; *Stikhotvoreniia i poemy*, Leningrad, 1961. There is still, however, nothing approaching a complete edition of Briusov's works. Aleksandr Blok, *Sobranie sochinenii*, 8 vols., Moscow-Leningrad, 1960-63; *Zapisnie knizhki*, Moscow-Leningrad, 1965.

[23] I. Annensky, *Stikhotvoreniia i tragedii*, A. V. Fedorov, ed., Leningrad, 1959.

[24] *Biblioteka poeta; annotirovannaia bibliografiia (1933-1965); obshchii plan*, Moscow-Leningrad, 1965, p. 253.

[25] A. Bely, *Stikhotvoreniia i poemy*, T. Khmelnitskaia, ed., Leningrad, 1966. The last Soviet edition of *Peterburg* was published in 1935; *Serebrianyi golub* has not been reprinted in Russia since the Revolution; none of his later novels, memoirs, or critical works have been reprinted since their original dates of publication.

[26] Konstantin Balmont, *Stikhotvoreniia*, Leningrad, 1969. A collective volume entitled *Poety nachala XX veka* and including Balmont, Sologub, Annensky, Viacheslav Ivanov, Bely, Voloshin, Kuzmin, Gumiliev, Mandelshtam, Khodasevich, and even Kliuev has apparently been published by the Poet's Library, according to dealers' lists, but I have not yet seen a copy.

[27] *Biblioteka poeta*, p. 254.

[28] F. Sologub, *Melkii bes*, Kemerovo, 1958.

[29] Anna Akhmatova, *Stikhotvoreniia* Moscow, 1958; *Stikhotvoreniia (1909-1960)*, Moscow, 1961; *Beg vremeni*, Moscow-Leningrad, 1965. One of the curiosities of Soviet literary life has been the championship of Akhmatova by the ultra-Stalinist party hack, Aleksei Surkov. He edited the 1958 and 1961 volumes of her poetry, the first to appear since 1940; since he was chief editor of the *Short Literary Encyclopedia*, it can also be assumed that he was responsible for an extraordinary article in its first volume, virtually presenting her as the ideal of everything a Soviet poet should be (the 1946 attacks on her by Zhdanov were not mentioned).

[30] Warm tributes were penned by A. Tvardovsky in *Izvestiia*, March 8, 1966, and Konstantin Paustovsky in *Literaturnaia gazeta*, March 9, 1966.

[31] Anna Akhmatova, *Rekviem*, Munich, 1963, and Rome, 1964; also in *Sochineniia*, G. P. Struve and B. A. Filippov eds., Washington, 1965. In a lecture delivered in Prague (just before the Soviet invasion), Academician V. M. Zhirmunsky asserted that a new edition of Akhmatova, which he is editing, would contain complete texts of all her works without exception; so far, however, there is no sign of this volume.

[32] Selective editions of Zoshchenko appeared in 1956, 1968, 1960, 1963 and 1965. In his introduction to the 1968 edition (*Izbrannie proizvedeniia*, 2 vols., Moscow), Gromov referred to the attacks on *Before Sunrise* in 1943 and to the Central Committee decree of 1946, deploring the fact Zoshchenko was not permitted "to develop with any artistic profundity the themes and problems of his work of the prewar years" (p. 45), and was thus obliged to support himself by translations. Nonetheless *Before Sunrise* was not included in the collection.

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Besides the collections, a number of sympathetic and admiring memoirs have been written about Zoshchenko by his literary friends.[33] (In general, the opening up of the memory hole has produced a veritable explosion of memoir literature.) Veniamin Kaverin has even attempted, against vigorous Stalinist opposition, to rehabilitate the whole group of "Serapion Brothers," to which both he and Zoshchenko belonged in the 1920's.[34]

Of works written "for the drawer" by Abjured writers in the Stalin era, the most notable to be published in recent years are the novels of Mikhail Bulgakov. Bulgakov was well known in the 1920's as both a dramatist and a writer of fiction, but by the end of the 1930's he was "forgotten"; harassed by censorship, he virtually ceased to publish and devoted himself to creating works he knew could not be published in his, or Stalin's, lifetime. Fortunately, the works survived, though Bulgakov himself died in 1940. A quarter of a century later, his "excavated" manuscripts, *The Master and Margarita* and *A Theatrical Novel*, became literary sensations both in Russia and in the West. Some, but unfortunately not all, of Bulgakov's unpublished plays have also seen the light.[35]

Rehabilitations of the Accursed

The Accursed have also fared rather unevenly in the process of resurrection. Apparently no clear official directive has ever been issued stating what is allowed and what is not; the process operates rather through a series of test cases. It is as if each ghost needed some influential living sponsor to promote his or her interests. Undoubtedly the boldest of the resurrectionists was Ilia Ehrenburg. Whatever his sins of the past (especially his behavior during the antisemitic purges of the late 1940's) he was enormously energetic in promoting a series of literary revivals. His own memoirs, though far from wholly frank or honest, must have been a great eye-opener to the young Soviet reader: there is not only the attractive picture he paints of life in the Paris Bohème and his undisguised enthusiasm for many "forbidden" modern European artists and poets, but also his evocation of the Russian literary past and his friendly appraisal of all sorts of taboo-ridden figures from Balmont to Babel.[36]

Ehrenburg was clearly the major promoter of the revival of Babel, who was a close personal friend and who figures prominently in the memoirs. Ehrenburg wrote a warm but cautious introduction for the edition of Babel's selected works published in 1957, only allowing himself a few terse sentences on Babel's demise: "In 1939, on the basis of a false denunciation, I. E. Babel was arrested. Unfortunately, the effort to discover the manuscripts of his unpublished works has not been successful. Babel died in 1941 at the age of forty-seven." Ehrenburg also remarked on the strange fact that the "young generation, which has never even heard the name of this great writer, can become acquainted with the books which struck us thirty years ago."[37] Another "forbidden" friend whose revival Ehrenburg has sponsored—apparently against conservative resistance—is the émigré poet Marina Tsvetaeva, who, after 17 years abroad, returned to the USSR in 1939 and committed suicide in 1941.[38]

Olesha, too, was "brought back" in the first flush of enthusiasm after the 20th Party Congress. In the postwar era he had published a few insignificant pieces but had not really rejoined Soviet literature: for a decade none of his major works was reprinted, nor was his name mentioned in articles on Soviet literature. But in 1956 a fairly complete collection of his works was at last brought out, with a long introduction exhorting Olesha to break his silence and to produce a major work reflecting his lifelong experience as a Soviet writer.[39] This Olesha was unable to do, and he died in 1960, leaving only some notebooks. Edited and introduced by Viktor Shklovsky, these have been published and favorably received.[40]

[33] Konstantin Fedin, "Mikhail Zoshchenko," *Pisatel, iskusstvo, vremia*, Moscow, 1961; Mikhail Slonimsky, *Kniga vospominanii*, Moscow, 1965; Kornel Chukovsky, "Zoshchenko," in *Sobranie sochinenii*, Vol. II, Moscow, 1967.

[34] V. Kaverin, "Za rabochim stolom," *Novyi mir*, No. 9, 1965.

[35] Bulgakov's "Master i Margarita" appeared in *Moskva*, No. 11, 1966, and No. 1, 1967. "Teatralnyi roman" was published in *Novyi mir*, No. 9, 1965, and also in *Izbrannaia proza*, Moscow, 1966.

[36] *Cf.* Ehrenburg, *op. cit.*

[37] I. Ehrenburg, "I. E. Babel," in I. Babel, *Izbrannoe*, Moscow, 1957, pp. 9, 5.

[38] Ehrenburg published an essay on Tsvetaeva in the famous "thaw" volume of *Literaturnaia Moskva* (Vol. II, Moscow, 1956), which also included some of her verse. The essay, which was to have been reprinted as the introduction to a volume of her poetry, became a principal target of attack in the conservative reaction of 1957, and the promised volume of Tsvetaeva did not appear until 1961, with Ehrenburg's essay missing. Since then a larger, but still incomplete and censored, edition of Tsvetaeva's poetry has been published (*Izbrannie proizvedeniia*, Moscow-Leningrad, 1965), as well as numerous articles and memoirs about her.

[39] Iu. Olesha, *Izbrannie sochineniia*, Moscow, 1956.

[40] Iu. Olesha, *Ni dnia bez strochki*, Moscow, 1965.

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On the other hand, certain of the Accursed, either lacking influential sponsors or because of some inherent quality in their work, still wait vainly for full restoration. This applies to both Pilniak and Zamiatin. There seems to be no move to reprint either of them; and although their names can now be mentioned in the large *History of Soviet Literature,* they are disclaimed in strong terms.

As for the poets, Osip Mandelshtam, though officially rehabilitated, is still handled very gingerly. Only the safe *Conversation on Dante* has been issued in book form, though a whole volume of Mandelshtam's poetry has been promised by the Poet's Library.[41] A good many of his lyric poems, including some from the "Voronezh notebooks," written in exile, have been published in magazines and almanacs.

Most of the "kulak" poets, except for Yesenin, remain virtually banned. A few poems by Klychkov have appeared in anthologies, but apparently none by Kliuev. A separate volume of Oreshin finally appeared in 1968.[42] Kliuev thus seems to be the most taboo of the lot, and in the extensive literature on Yesenin an effort is made to play up to the maximum Yesenin's alleged ideological break with his quondam master.[43]

Benedikt Livschitz is mentioned in the materials on Maiakovsky, and a volume of his translations from French has been announced.[44] Sorgenfrei is mentioned only in the literature on Blok, not as an original poet. Finally, Zabolotsky is now fully accepted, posthumously, as a major Soviet poet, but his early "surrealist" verse has been reprinted only in doctored versions he produced after the war.[45]

Resurrected Communists

Less attention has been paid outside of Russia to the rehabilitation of the Damned, probably because there were so few major writers among them; but as seen from within the USSR, their rehabilitations have formed a major part of the whole resurrection process. Total as their damnation once was, the ghosts of the obliterated Communists have on the whole found it easier to emerge from oblivion. The reason is obvious. After all, the regime is still made up of Communists who believe that literature should be used as a means of inculcating Communist ideology in the population over which they rule. The writings of Communists, even purged ones, are the most likely to serve this purpose, provided they are not too deviant from today's party line.

Therefore those Communist writers who suffered for purely arbitrary reasons, simply at the caprice, the notorious *proizvol,* of Stalin and the NKVD, could be unreservedly revived, even with a considerable amount of official fanfare. Mikhail Koltsov, for example, was restored fairly quickly to full glory in the Soviet pantheon. A three-volume edition of his *Selected Works* appeared in 1957, followed two years later by a book-length monograph which recommended him as a model hero for Soviet youth to imitate. To be sure, statements about his arrest and imprisonment were extremely brief and vague, as in the case of all the returnees from limbo. There was no account of the charges brought against him, nor of his trial (if there was one) or sentence, nor of his years in prisons and camps. At the end of the 233-page monograph there were two tersely uneasy sentences: "Slandered by his enemies, Koltsov was arrested on December 12, 1938. In 1942 Koltsov was no more."[46] Koltsov's fellow journalist, the professional Stalin-flatterer David Zaslavsky, was equally elusive in his introduction to the 1957 edition of Koltsov: "Soon after his return from Spain, Koltsov's literary and political career was tragically broken off. In 1938 he became the victim of hostile slander. In 1954 he was posthumously rehabilitated."[47]

Of the Damned writers, Artiom Vesioly, Ivan Kataev, Viktor Kin, and Vladimir Kirshon have been fully rehabilitated. New editions of their works have been published,[48] and various articles and

[41] O. Mandelshtam, *Razgovor o Dante*, Moscow, 1967; *Biblioteka poeta*, p. 254.

[42] Piotr Oreshin, *Izbrannoe*, K. P. Oreshina, ed., Moscow, 1968.

[43] *Cf.* S. Yesenin, *Sobranie sochinenii*, Vol. V. Moscow, 1962, pp. 318-319 (note by V. Zemskov and N. Khomchuk). Khomchuk developed the same point at greater length in his article "Yesenin i Kliuev (po neopublikovannym materialam)," *Russkaia literatura*, No. 2, 1958.

[44] *V. Maiakovsky v vospominaniiakh sovremennikov*, N. V. Reformatskaia, compiler, Moscow, 1963, pp. 103-107. *Ot romantikov do siurrealistov; stikhi frantsuzskikh poetov v perevode Benedikta Livshitsa*, Moscow, 1969.

[45] N. Zabolotsky, *Stikhotvoreniia*, Moscow, 1967; *Stikhotvoreniia*, Moscow, 1959; *Izbrannoe*, Moscow, 1960; *Stikhotvoreniia i poemy*, Moscow-Leningrad, 1965.

[46] G. Skorokhodov, *Mikhail Koltsov; kritiko-biograficheskii ocherk*, Moscow, 1959, p. 233.

[47] D. Zaslavsky, "Mikhail Koltsov," in M. Koltsov, *Izbrannie proizvedeniia*, 3 vols., Moscow, 1957, Vol. 1.

[48] A. Vesioly, *Izbrannie sochineniia*, Moscow, 1958. I. Kataev, *Izbrannoe*, Moscow, 1958. V. Kirshon, *Dramaticheskie proizvedeniia*, Moscow, 1957; *Izbrannoe*, Moscow, 1958; *Stati i rechi o dramaturgii, teatre i kino*, Moscow, 1962. V. Kin, *Po tu storonu*, Moscow, 1956, and several later editions up to 1968; also *Izbrannoe*, Moscow, 1965.

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books have treated them as venerable figures in Soviet literature. Characteristically, one of the early articles on Vesioly began: "By no means every contemporary young reader knows the name of Artiom Vesioly; but in the middle of the 1920's and 1930's this writer was one of the most popular in our literature." No explanation whatever was offered for the surprising ignorance on the part of "every contemporary young reader." The author merely proceeded to a survey of Vesioly's life and works, among other things trying to absolve him of one of his chief sins, sharing the Pilniakian "elemental" heresy in his view of the Revolution. About Vesioly's ultimate fate he was as vague as possible: "It was not granted to Artiom Vesioly to realize his dreams and plans; his life, full of creative fire and labor, was broken off early." [49]

This was apparently as far as one could go in 1957. By 1962 a new formula had appeared, approved for use in the new *Short Literary Encyclopedia:* "In 1937 Vesioly was illegally repressed (sic: *nezakonno repressirovan*); posthumously rehabilitated." The same phrase ("illegally repressed") is used for Babel and many others.[50]

The "proletarian" poets have also been fully rehabilitated, and their works copiously reissued, studied and anthologized. Their spiritual mentor, however, the critic Aleksandr Bogdanov (1873-1928), a one-time philosophical opponent of Lenin, has not been republished—he was much too independent for a good Communist. Among others, Vsevolod Meierhold has been completely restored to grace, and considerable literature about him has appeared.[51]

It is natural that the liberals of today have felt an affinity for the "liberal" Communist critics and editors of yesteryear, like Voronsky and Polonsky. Moreover, many surviving writers have remained indebted and grateful to the purged liberals for former assistance or inspiration. The purged have therefore had advocates before the bar of history who have pushed their rehabilitation. At the same time, there has been considerable conservative and official resistance to the revival of Damned Communists, especially if their writings contained theoretical ideas still considered unacceptable.

This tug-of-war has resulted in mixed treatment of the "ghosts": while they have gotten highly favorable mention in "liberal" memoirs, their ideas have been the target of conservative attack, and only a limited portion of their work has been published, usually with introductions that once again repudiate their errors of the past. In the case of Voronsky, for instance, two of his unpublished manuscripts of the 1930's have been issued, as well as a book of fictionalized memoirs and parts of an unfinished book on Gogol.[52] Of his major critical writings of the 1920's, however, only one volume of selected essays on individual writers has been published, and that with a rather condescending introduction by A. G. Dementiev (himself recently purged from the editorial board of the liberal organ *Novyi mir)*, warning the reader against Voronsky's heretical "intuitionist" theory of literary creation.[53] Voronsky's articles setting forth this theory are not, of course, included.

Similarly, only one collection of Polonsky's *Critical Writings* has appeared,[54] though his correspondence with various writers of the 1920's has been extensively published. He has been very favorably treated in some memoirs, especially in connection with the 40th anniversary in 1965 of *Novyi mir*, of which he was an early editor.[55]

Of the Pereverzevists, Ivan Bespalov has been treated much like Voronsky: a volume of his critical articles (with a condescending introduction) has been issued, consisting in the main of his more orthodox pieces, while omitting his earlier, more interesting "Pereverzevist" essays.[56] One volume of Pereverzev himself was reissued in 1965 with a preface signed "Author"—a slightly altered version of the original preface of 1937. It provides no in-

[49] M. Charnyi, "Artiom Vesioly," *Oktiabr*, No. 9, 1957, pp. 188, 202.

[50] An indication of the wariness with which this subject has been approached by writers of encyclopedia articles is the literal and unvarying repetition of these phrases in articles written by and about different people. There seem to be two approved versions: the "short form," as quoted here, and a "long form," optionally used as a substitute. The latter reads as follows: "In connection with the violations of socialist legality during the period of the cult of Stalin's personality, [X] was repressed; posthumously rehabilitated." *Cf.* Gleb Struve, "Dnevnik chitatelia," *Russkaia mysl* (Paris), Sept. 28, 1946; Oct. 5, 1965; Dec. 3, 1966; Aug. 3, 1967; Aug. 10, 1967.

[51] *E.g.*, see I. Rostotsky, *O rezhisserskom tvorchestve V. E. Meierholda*, Moscow, 1960; *Vstrechi s Meierholdom; sbornik vospominanii*, Moscow, 1967. Also V. E. Meierhold, *Stati, pisma, rechi, besedy*, 2 vols., Moscow, 1968.

[52] A. K. Voronsky, *Bursa*, A. G. Dementiev, ed., Moscow, 1966; "Iz knigi 'Gogol'," *Novyi mir*, No. 8, 1964.

[53] A. K. Voronsky, *Literaturno-kriticheskie stati*, G. A. Voronskaia and A. G. Dementiev, eds., Moscow, 1963. Voronsky's correspondence with Gorky has also been published in *M. Gorky i sovetskaia pechat*, Vol. II, Moscow, 1965.

[54] V. Polonsky, *Na literaturnie temy; Izbrannie stati*, K. A. Polonskaia and A. G. Dementiev, eds., Moscow, 1968.

[55] N. Smirnov, "Pervie gody 'Novovo mira'," *Novyi mir*, No. 7, 1964; A. G. Dementiev and I. Dikushina, "Proidennyi put," *Novyi mir*, No. 1, 1965.

[56] I. M. Bespalov, *Stati o literature*, F. Levin, ed., Moscow, 1959.

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formation about the author, except the most important fact—that he was alive in 1965 and had miraculously survived the Stalin age.[57] A second volume by Pereverzev on Old Russian literature has been announced.

The old ultra-Left of the 1920's and early 1930's has not been treated nearly as well as the "liberals." Only Semion Rodov appears to have survived the years of prison and exile.[58] The others are all dead, and even their names remained "hot" for some years after the 20th Congress. Illarion Vardin (1890-1943), for example, did not rate an entry in Volume I of the *Short Literary Encyclopedia* (1962), although his name occurred repeatedly in the correspondence of Yesenin, published in the same year[59]; nor did he appear under his real name, Mgeladze, in Volume IV. Lelevich and Gorbachov, though quite prominent figures in their day, with many books of criticism and literary history to their credit, belonged for a time after 1956 to that strangest of all classes in the Soviet limbo—mentionable but not listable in indexes! At least this was the case in the first edition of the three-volume *History of Soviet Russian Literature*. Oddly enough the same was true of their old antagonist, Leopold Averbakh, the Stalin of Soviet literature in the years 1928-32: there was no reference to him in the *Short Literary Encyclopedia*, and he was not listed in the index of the *History of Soviet Russian Literature* (first edition), though mentioned in its "chronicle" section. More recently, all three of these men seem to have been moved up a notch. In the new, expanded edition of the *History*, they are mentioned in the main text and not just in the "chronicle" at the back; presumably they will also make the index (to be published in a future fourth volume), since they have begun to appear in other bibliographies. But there has been no move to reprint their works, and articles about them tend to stress their "mistakes"—for instance, the entry for Gorbachov in Volume II of the *Short Literary Encyclopedia* (1964). Among the orthodox RAPP-ites, Averbakh seems to suffer from some special taboo, although the intrepid Kaverin is not afraid to characterize him not entirely unfavorably in his recent memoirs.[60] Averbakh's satellites have fared better, and volumes of critical essays by both Kirshon and Selivanovsky have been published.[61]

The Limits of Change

Thus the practice of literary resurrection in post-Stalin Russia, like so many other aspects of destalinization, is full of contradictions and ambiguities, which doubtless stem from the basic ambiguity in the position of the present government and its successive leaders. After all, it is not as if there had been a genuine change of regime. The same party is in power, pursuing largely the same policies; moreover, the people who run that party were all of them close henchmen of Stalin and thus accessories to the crimes they were later to denounce, including "repressions" of writers.

It is therefore important to recognize the continuity, as well as the change, that has characterized the Soviet Union since Stalin's death. Although there have been recurrent cycles of concession and repression over the past 17 years, and although (as noted earlier) we now seem to be witnessing a very drastic regression towards orthodoxy, the successive post-Stalin leaderships have been basically alike in two respects: they have refrained from resorting to the extreme forms of Stalin's tyranny; at the same time, they have insisted on maintaining dictatorial controls in every sphere of Soviet life. Their fundamental principle has remained constant: *proizvol* (arbitrariness) is to be eliminated, but not *partiinost* (party-mindedness). The latter emphasis means that reexamination of the past must not be carried too far, and that there must be no public discussion of questions which Stalin had settled to his successors' satisfaction. Criticism of "errors and distortions" (to use the standard Soviet euphemism) must not lead to Trotskyization or Bukharinization or Menshevization.

This applies first of all, of course, in the sphere of politics. In literature the regime has been willing (though less so in recent years) to permit the resurrection of writers unjustly persecuted by Stalin—provided their ideology is not too deviant. The range of tolerance of varied points of view is certainly greater than it was, but it is still not very

[57] V. F. Pereverzev, *U istokov russkovo realisticheskovo romana*, Moscow, 1965. Pereverzev died in 1967.

[58] I conclude this from an annotation in *Tsentralnyi gosudarstvennyi arkhiv literatury i iskusstva SSSR*, Moscow, 1963, p. 662. Rodov also wrote a preface for a volume of poems by the proletarian poet Aleksandrovsky in 1957.

[59] S. Yesenin, *Sobranie sochinenii*, Vol. V, Moscow, 1962, *passim*.

[60] V. Kaverin, "Neskolko let," *Novyi mir*, No. 11, 1966, pp. 136 ff.

[61] For Kirshon, see note 48 above. A. P. Selivanovsky, *V literaturnykh boiakh*, Moscow, 1963.

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large. Rehabilitation has a long way to go before "every contemporary young reader" can really see what Russian literature was like forty, fifty and sixty years ago. The ghosts may walk again, but they are not allowed to disturb the basic *status quo*, the party line in literature, which insists on confining creative talent to the expression of *partiinost* and socialist realism.

In the fourteen years that have passed since the 20th Congress, the resurrections of purged writers, like other aspects of Soviet literary politics, have fluctuated back and forth along with "conservative" and "liberal" swings of the political pendulum. But the degrees of resurrection seem to have become fairly solidly fixed as outlined here: resurrection with full honors, republication of works and issuance of laudatory monographs; resurrection with "selected" republication and, on the whole, laudatory comment; restoration of the right to be listed in encyclopedias and credited with some positive contributions, but without republication of works and with a good deal of negative comment in histories; restoration of the right to be mentioned in histories but with wholly pejorative comment; and finally, restoration of the right to be mentioned in passing, but not the right to be listed in indexes. The final degree of obliteration, however—total and complete oblivion—seems to exist no longer.

Art and Artists of the "Underground"

By Arsen Pohribny

A guide was to be waiting for me at the Kaluzhskaia subway exit at 4 p.m. I found myself in a thick crowd of people, and I doubted that he would find me since we had never seen each other. But within minutes I was approached by a man of about thirty, who turned out to be the chief engineer of an electrical appliance factory. I soon discovered that he had two particularly useful qualifications as a guide: he knew the addresses of a whole series of avant-garde painters, *and* he had a car. With the enormous distances that have to be traveled in modern Moscow, the car proved invaluable.

Author of numerous books on contemporary art, Mr. Pohribny left his native Czechoslovakia for Italy following the Soviet invasion of his homeland in 1968.

Our first appointment was with Ilia Kabakov, in his new attic studio. His previous atelier, a journalist told me, had been a damp, cold cellar which could have served as a setting for Maxim Gorky's *Lower Depths*; visitors to it were handed large glasses of vodka as they entered, to help them endure the dungeon-like atmosphere. Now the young painter had exchanged his burrow for a pigeon-coop. When we had climbed up to his attic, we saw carpenters transforming the rest of the floor into artists' studios. These workmen, who had come after finishing their regular daily shift in some factory, were relatives of the future occupants of the studios.

Kabakov is one of the most talented young artists in the Soviet Union. His work could stand up to the scrutiny of the most exacting of Western

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art critics. The official arbiters of Soviet art have labeled him a "cosmopolitan." Actually, he has used elements of Surrealism, Dadaism and Pop Art to create a special prism through which one sees uniquely Soviet images. Apparitions of the absurd executed with precise craftsmanship, these images have the power to chill the viewer.

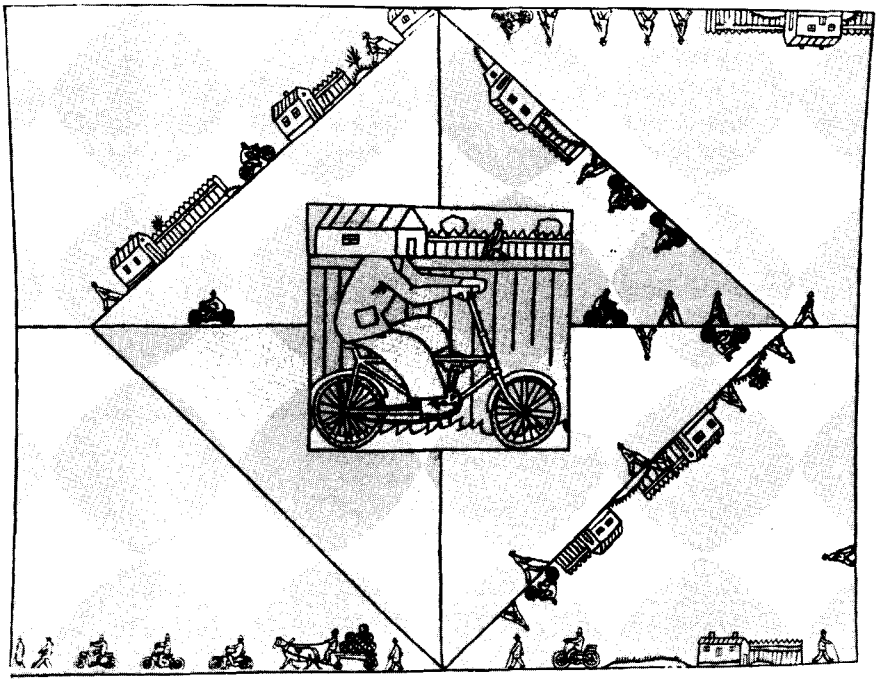
Kabakov was waiting for us, surrounded by his paintings. Since work like his cannot be shown publicly, he relished this rare opportunity to communicate with the outside world. I asked some blunt questions. Could such paintings be sold? What did "underground" artists live on? How could he pay for the attic studio? Kabakov's answers were vague and evasive. Obviously, these were matters it was not wise for a non-conformist Soviet artist to discuss with strangers. At this point, my guide intervened to vouch for me, and to explain on Kabakov's behalf:

Well, every now and then, one finds a buyer among friends. And sometimes, though not very often, interested foreigners come along. But transactions with foreigners are supposed to come under the control of the Office on the Exportation of Art Works. Anyone who tries to bypass this office and gets caught finds himself in a fantastic mess. This is precisely what happened a few years ago to Kabakov and his friends when their paintings and drawings were exhibited in Italy. Some Western journalists seized upon the exhibit as an occasion for criticizing official Soviet policy on artistic freedom, and certain Moscow bureaucrats attributed these criticisms to the artists themselves. The attack was strikingly reminiscent of the official strategy preceding the Siniavsky-Daniel trial and seemed to portend another trial of "ideological enemies and calumniators of the Soviet government." Luckily, the texts of the articles in the foreign press were obtained in Moscow before the attack had gone very far, and it could be shown that the quotations cited by the bureaucrats had been taken out of context, and that the charges against the artists had been "fabricated."[1]

After hearing this tale, I was not surprised that Kabakov declined my offer to arrange an exhibit for him in Stockholm; according to my guide, he had already turned down a number of similar offers.

When our visit had lasted about an hour, Kabakov left to transact some business at a publishing house, but he invited us to stay and take as many photographs as we liked. I availed myself of the opportunity to take a close look around this labyrinth of an attic, which covered about 70 square yards. The place was heated, and the walls lined with insulating panels. How much, I asked, had all this cost Kabakov? "Thousands of rubles," replied my guide, ". . . and his nerves." For labor and materials alone, the painter had paid more than 6,000 rubles—the price of a very good car—which he had earned by illustrating children's books. In addition, hundreds of rubles had dis-

[1] I have not been able to ascertain whether the exhibit referred to was the one held in Rome in 1967 under the title "Fifteen Young Painters of Moscow," or one called "Alternative Attuali," held in Aquila in 1965, in which Kabakov and others also participated.



Ilia Kabakov — "Our Everyday Thoughts," 1966-67 (photo by author).

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appeared into the pockets of officials who acted as middlemen in this business. There had been years of deprivation, of begging for commissions, of making sure to get the necessary recommendations. It had been a long and tortuous road from the cellar to this room near the sky.

From Kabakov's studio it was not far to Taron's. We entered one of those monstrous tenements built in the 1920's. There were the usual dark, winding hallways with their rows of doors, each opening onto a narrow room where an entire family lived, several families sharing a big, dirty common kitchen. I marveled that in this gloomy maze my guide was able to find the right door. The room was only nine feet wide, just big enough to hold a bench, a small cupboard, an easel.

Taron, who had the fine, dark face of a tribal chief from the Caucasus, was born in Chemkent—he didn't know exactly when, maybe 1940.[2] Then the war had come, and he became one of the thousands of lost children whose lives alternated between orphanages and reformatories. His drawings reflected this experience. They were tangles of automatic lines, from which emerged the horrible grimaces of a mask. Bitterness and vengeance seemed to have led this man to art. On the back of one of his drawings, dated April 1966, Taron had written a poem—a litany of curses. Underneath it he had scribbled: "This is written in a madhouse, where a pederast has violated us."

This note explained a great deal, including Taron's outspokenness. He was not afraid because, except for a meager state pension of 30 rubles a month, he had nothing to lose. Like so many of his compatriots who had been put in lunatic asylums, he was an outcast, virtually excluded from the human community. I was later to meet some young artists who had deliberately pretended madness and been officially recognized as insane. By doing so, they became second-class citizens, but they also escaped military service and police persecution. Their sacrifice gives us a measure of the repugnance they must have felt for the conventional patterns of Soviet life.

Towards evening, we crossed the city to visit the apartment where P. Roginsky lived and worked. Unfortunately he was not at home. While his ten-year-old son Sashka regaled me in the kitchen with a professorial dissertation on abstruse problems of space exploration, his mother and my guide were on the telephone trying to persuade Roginsky to let them show me at least one of his works. He refused—he had made it a strict rule to permit no one to enter his studio in his absence. Although my guide was a close friend of Roginsky, there was always the fear that even *he* might be taken in by an informer.

Why such fear, mistrust, and caution? Does the Soviet government really believe itself threatened by paintings hidden in locked rooms? Yes, the fact is that the authorities place avant-garde works of art in the same category as anti-regime pamphlets and firearms. No deviations can be permitted in a country where the dogma of unity is sacrosanct: "Who is not with us is against us."

Before going to the Soviet Union, I had tried to find out as much as I could about the non-conformist artists. What information I managed to assemble was obtained more by word of mouth than from written sources. According to official Soviet publications, Socialist Realism was forging ahead to ever greater successes, undaunted by the few artistic "hooligans." Western studies on the subject, while more objective, were not much more informative. Paul Sjeklocha and Igor Mead, in their book *Unofficial Art in the Soviet Union*, estimated that there were about 1,000 "unofficial" artists in the USSR, 500 of them living in Moscow.[3] Other sources have specifically mentioned some twenty-odd avant-garde artists of real significance.

There is a real problem of identification here. Who is an "official" artist? Should one include the "left academicians," or the dozens of semi-official artists who do conventional work all week but paint abstract canvases on Sunday? And who can provide a reliable list of the "damned" when even they do not know one another, or want to? The written sources are limited to two or three catalogues and a few articles in Western magazines, where the same names are always repeated. The reason for this paucity of information is that the regime bars the works of the non-conformist artists from public view, thus cutting off the essential interaction between the artists and their environ-

[2] The artist also could not tell me his family name. Taron, I learned, is his given name.

[3] Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1967, p. 104.

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Valentina Kropivnitskaia—"Memories," 1968 (photo by author).

ment, reducing their activity virtually to a private hobby, and confining their works within a small, restricted world of family and friends. The only way to see their work and to learn something about their manner of living is to ferret out their studios and apartments like a private detective.

I am not sure that my personal observations in Moscow provide satisfactory answers to the many questions that have been asked about the life, attitudes, and problems of the officially-proscribed artists. In the limited time I had at my disposal, I chose to concentrate on their artistic activity, giving less attention to other aspects of their lives. In this I was influenced by the extraordinary reticence of the artists themselves. When it came to politics or the difficult conditions under which they had to live, they talked only vaguely, in gray and neutral terms. Topics which, if frankly discussed, might expose them to official attack and reprisals were taboo. And because the problems the non-conformist artists face in earning a living are so complex and devious, I came to realize that it was indiscreet, to say the least, to interrogate them on this subject after only two hours' acquaintance. Most of what I learned about the private lives of the artists was told to me by my guide rather than by the artists themselves.

One conclusion I arrived at was that the hardships of the non-conformist artists' daily lives—the inevitable consequence of official disapproval—strongly influence their attitudes, their perception of the world, and their way of expressing it in art. Thus the painter Lev Kropivnitsky recalled the change of vision he had experienced in exile:

It is necessary to break free internally . . . to move freely again. . . . My old, realistic landscapes did not give me that freedom. But one day I understood that abstract painting could. In the year 1954, on the sands of Kazakhstan, I made my first experiments. Two years later, returning to Moscow, I knew it—abstract painting, that is my road.

For others, the conflict between their own high ideals and the material and spiritual poverty of their lives is mirrored in the crazy grimaces and messianic visions of their paintings. V. Yakovlev, for example, takes his revenge by painting devastating portraits of his oppressors. The Easter cycle of A. Smirnov uses Byzantine images to show how people have been degraded to the state of beasts.

Whether because of the inertia of tradition or to compensate for their political impotence, some avant-garde painters have invested the portrait with a magical role. Others—magic symbolists like M. Grobman, Aleksandr Kharitonov, and Valentina Kropivnitskaia—conjure up scenes from fables of the Golden Age and secretly believe that these fairy tales will be transformed into reality. Such works are not merely esthetic exercises. It would be a mistake to view Soviet avant-garde painting in the same light as Western art movements. To do this is to overlook the intimate meaning of these pictures, which were created under the sword of Damocles, under the threat of spying and interrogation, and even of deportation. This sense

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of menace is a crucial part of the content of Soviet avant-garde art.

During my first days in Moscow, I thought that the non-conformist artists' sense of being under constant threat was exaggerated, and I was irritated at what seemed to me their excessive caution. I had read in the Sjeklocha-Mead study, referred to earlier, that painting in "modernist" styles was not prohibited by Soviet law, and that in recent years no Soviet artist had been arrested and imprisoned,[4] although the same book contained reproductions of a number of works whose creators were simply listed as "Anonymous," presumably for their protection.

It was not long, however, before I began to share the artists' awareness of an omnipresent and menacing shadow. Three particular experiences were responsible for this. The first occurred when I took a Soviet artist, whom I shall simply call V., to meet an English writer at the Metropole Hotel. As the three of us were leaving the hotel, we ran into a girl employee of the Academy of Sciences, who some days earlier had helped me with a bibliography. I paused to exchange a few words with her, and when I turned around to rejoin my companions, only the writer was there. V. had disappeared, and he rejoined us only after we had turned the corner. He looked at me with suspicion. "Did that girl invite you here?" he asked. "No, why?" I replied. "She's a stool pigeon," V. explained. "Didn't you know?" I objected that a research worker at the Academy of Sciences did not need to make money that way. "You don't understand a thing about it," V. insisted. "She may have been forced to do it. And if you give in once, they never let you out of their net." Then he told me of a sequence of suspicious incidents at each of which the same girl had been present. I still couldn't quite believe that she was an informer, but who knows?

The second experience took place in the studio of the young Ukrainian painter V. Polevoy. He had just spread out before us some of his small terracotta sculptures and his drawings. Suddenly he jumped up, ran to the door and threw it open. Standing there, huddled up close to the door, was a man with a telephone receiver in his hand. Upon being discovered, he quickly began speaking into the mouthpiece as if he were carrying on a conversation. But the base of the telephone was ten feet away down the corridor! "He does this to me several times a day," Polevoy explained. "The important thing," he added, "is not to let oneself be disconcerted by it. What they want to do is to frighten us and break our spirit." Again and again I was to hear this use of the word "they," signifying some all-powerful and oppressive external force, some ubiquitous presence that filled one with apprehension.

The third incident happened when I visited a painter whom I will call by the pseudonym of Tchirkovsky. Until 1960, he had been one of the leaders of the young avant-garde, who made his studio their meeting place. Then a popular Western magazine published some photographs of his compositions. He was promptly denounced for organizing a center of alien ideology, ceased to receive any commissions for art work, and found himself under constant surveillance. Most of his friends stopped seeing him.

Tchirkovsky took me to his studio by a roundabout route, talking the while about the new productions of Brecht, but pausing every once in a while to look suspiciously at the other pedestrians. He knew the faces of those assigned to shadow him, but he had reached the point where almost everyone seemed to resemble his watchful "guardians." As we entered his ground-floor apartment, I noticed that the door was sound-proofed. We squeezed along a corridor lined with rows of stacked-up paintings until we came to the room that served as his studio. His first act was to draw the plastic curtains, as people had done during the wartime blackouts to keep from being spotted by the enemy.

Then he turned on the light, revealing a room so crammed with objects of one sort or another that only a narrow path was left open through the middle of the room. Evidence that the place had once been frequented by the spiritual elite covered one of the walls—plaster casts of the hands, and sometimes the faces, of poets such as Yevtushenko, Okudzava, and Akhmadulina, of painters and of scientists, hung suspended on cords like dried fish. Under the dismembered faces and hands hung drills for woodworking. Tchirkovsky loved archaic masks and had made a variety of them. Another wall was covered with shelves full of wonderful small abstract sculptures and other art objects. The shelves and cupboards themselves were painted like Indian wigwams. With the voraciousness of a Brazilian jungle, Tchirkovsky's decorative instinct had taken possession of every corner of the room.

[4] *Op. cit.*, XIII.

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Yet his art remained confined within this one room. Between the shelves and a printing press, dozens upon dozens of paintings stood stacked against one another, so that when Tchirkovsky wanted to show some of them to me, he could do no more than move them slightly apart. So these works, dedicated to the cause of artistic freedom, have instead imprisoned their creator. What a paradox—that the artist's dream of eternal joy and harmony as pictured on these canvases should have found expression in this room, on the edge of the abyss of madness. Suddenly the door bell rings. Tchirkovsky stiffens, clutching at me with his eyes. Someone unexpected wants to come in. We don't move. We wait.

I admit that at that moment I, too, succumbed to this strange paranoia. Later, when I was alone, I asked myself: What caused that sudden wave of anxiety? Telepathy from the persecuted man? Was it a conditioned reflex built up by the earlier experiences related above? Or was it simply that I had come to understand better what it meant to be a Soviet artist on the official blacklist? It was true that no one had been arrested lately for what he painted. But among the avant-garde artists of Moscow there were not a few who had been in labor camps or insane asylums, and many more who had been spied upon, harassed, and interrogated, and who had seen their own persecution extended to their relatives and friends. Living in virtual ostracism from society, all of them were acutely and intimately aware of the regime's permanent suspicion of the intelligentsia, and of the fate that had befallen their literary counterparts, Andrei Siniavsky, Yuli Daniel and others.

The "policeman of the spirit" has indeed become a central presence in their lives, often more oppressive than material poverty. This shadow walks with them in the street, sits down with them at the dinner table, listens when they talk on the telephone, stands behind the door when they start to draw or model. For these artists it matters little that this presence is not as fierce or compelling as it was in the days of Stalinist terror. The ubiquitous "policeman of the spirit" affects them despite their efforts to resist. Many of them become passive, cautious, silent, hiding their feelings behind the stony mask of the ordinary Soviet citizen. Their speech is full of symbolic, veiled references, since they are always aware of the threat of censorship. Some repress their opinions completely, carrying their "policeman" home with them. In this, they conform to a tradition that goes back many centuries—a tradition of tortured conscience, vague guilt feelings, passivity in the face of authority, and exaggeration of the power of the police. The tragic result is that these victims, intimidated into prudence and demonstrations of loyalty, themselves contribute to the effectiveness of the official system of repression.

But for a sizable proportion of the younger avant-garde artists, dissent has become almost compulsive and goes beyond just the issue of artistic freedom. They refuse to be identified with the oppressors, and they openly sympathize with the injured. If in the Stalin era it was considered a patriotic virtue to denounce one's neighbor, an increasing segment of Soviet youth is now moving toward the opposite extreme. "Only those who have been punished or persecuted are just; the others are more or less guilty, and we must keep our distance from them." This statement was made to me by one of the young painters I met, and it reflected an attitude that I found to be widespread.

A number of dissenting artists, it is true, still believe in the principles of communism, but they distinguish between "progressive" ideology and bureaucratic power. For them, the Revolution remains sacred, the gateway to a better order, but the authoritarian "idiots" have distorted its ideas and taken disastrous detours. What is needed is a return to the original, pristine principles of the party; and in art this means a return to sincerity, truth, and responsibility.

Already during the wave of cultural liberalization that followed Khrushchev's secret speech of 1956, some of the younger artists began projecting these ideas into their work, substituting portraits of brutality for the approved, shining faces of "positive" heroes. I saw the results of this period of sincerity and rebirth at several artists' studios when I visited the Soviet Union in 1959. The painter Dmitri Krasnopevtsev was then living on Kropotkina Road, in a one-story annex to a large tenement. Thin and taciturn, he seemed to be in the grip of some painful experience. His shyness was reflected in his paintings, which contained no human figures. Krasnopevtsev believed only in things and their simplicity. So he painted jugs, broken pieces, bombs, cupboards, mineral crystals—with theatrical highlights and shadows, as if they were actors in some tragedy.

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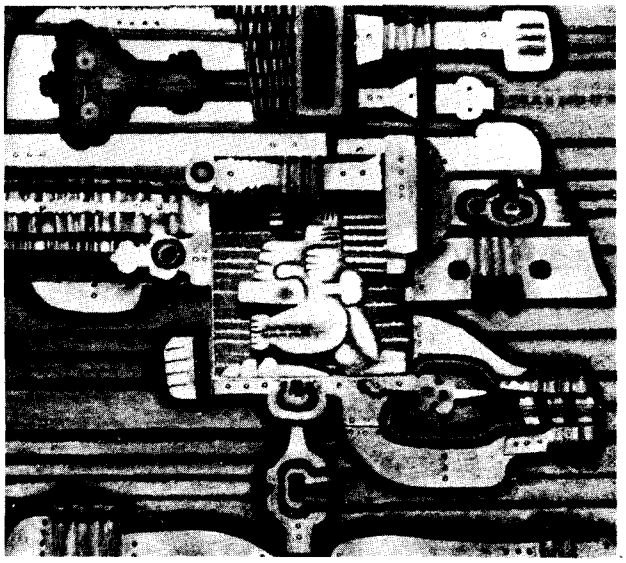

Vladimir Yankilevsky—Right-hand section of a triptych, 1965 (photo by author).

During the day, Krasnopevtsev earned his living by painting huge posters of smiling beauties, to be displayed at the entrances of movie houses. In the evenings, he was silent among his paintings and other prized belongings. He had a fantastic collection of shells, strange corals, and rocks, which he had brought back from the Black Sea. Something of their mystery entered into his paintings, which he saw as associated with no artistic school, but simply as a means of spiritual refuge.

Another artist I visited in 1959 was the sculptor, Ernst Neizvestny, who struck out even more fiercely at the system of bureaucratic repression—and for good reason. From childhood on, he had experienced only the most brutal and degrading aspects of Soviet life. After growing up in semi-exile near the Urals, he was almost killed in the war, spent some time in a Soviet prison camp, and became a recognized artist after the war, only to be expelled from the Academy and forced to work in factories. In the small cellar he inhabited under a new apartment house on Leningrad Chaussée, I saw the horrible Baroque designs of his "War Cycle." A later series in the same vein, "Robots and Semi-Robots," earned the widely-publicized displeasure of Khrushchev at the Manège in 1962.

Neizvestny was an outlaw type, a fighter for the things he believed in. But it would be a mistake to idealize him for his intransigeance. Life had taught him that the roads to achieving one's goal could be many. Along with his protest pieces in that little cellar, where there were more heating pipes than space, I saw heads done in the official mode. Neizvestny could be successful both as a politician and as an artist. Early in his career he found powerful protectors and buyers among the scientific and bureaucratic elite. As the first notable Soviet avant-garde artist, he received important commissions (though this success was spoiled for him by the need to compromise) and was exhibited abroad.[5] Today, despite some setbacks, he has reached the status of a semi-official, widely-respected sculptor, without seriously compromising his modernist tendencies.

A third artist I met during my earlier visit was Yuri Vasilev, who earned his official living as an illustrator and stage designer. But in his private work he was one of the most tempestuous and protean interpreters of the post-Stalin mood. The sculptures, graphics, paintings and assemblages I saw in his bedroom studio on Ulianovskaia Road could have filled a small museum. This dynamic, temperamental man took the official statements on rehabilitation literally. Proceeding methodically through a variety of phases, he "rehabilitated" all the major trends in Western art that had been bypassed in the Soviet Union. By 1957 he had painted his first abstract canvas, "Greenland." I asked him why he had decided on the uncompromising path of modern art. He replied:

You know, in 1952, when I came out of the Institute of Surikov, I found myself swamped with commissions. It may have been because I worked so rapidly, and perhaps because the art establishment wanted at the time to show itself the friend of youth. Anyway, I had the opportunity to find out how repulsive, how much like hyenas were these hucksters who dominated Soviet art, who decided the fate of talented artists, often consigning them to poverty. This nauseated me. I have never forgotten how Gerasimov and his ilk liquidated our avant-garde in the 1930's. In 1954 I decided to go against the current. For me the avant-garde means the Revolution, and all these manipulators have falsified it. But the ideas of the Revolution will win in the end, and our art, which is now silenced, will finally belong to the people.

For Vasilev, it was not the esthetic but the moral issue which was decisive. And many other Soviet artists, despite their differences, shared his faith in a messianic rebirth of revolutionary purity. Thus the figurative painter Leonid Polistzuk, the "Machinist" Vladimir Yankilevsky, the kinetic

[5] Neizvestny's works were exhibited in 1964 at the Grosvenor Gallery in London and at the Zentralbuchhandlung in Vienna; in 1966, at the Galerie Lambert in Paris and also in Prague.

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artist Lev Nusberg all regarded their painted or constructed visions as forms of utopia, of true socialism, of total liberation.

Something should also be said here about some of the new forms of "collective" art in the Soviet Union. Teamwork in art has actually been practiced since the time of ancient Egypt, but it acquired a new vogue in the USSR with the execution of huge historical canvases in the official style of Socialist Realism. Now, it has been carried over into the realm of avant-garde art, the most interesting examples being the abstract expressionist school of Beliutin,[6] the Prometheus "colored music" collective of Kazany, and finally the kinetic art group known as Dvizhenie (The Movement).

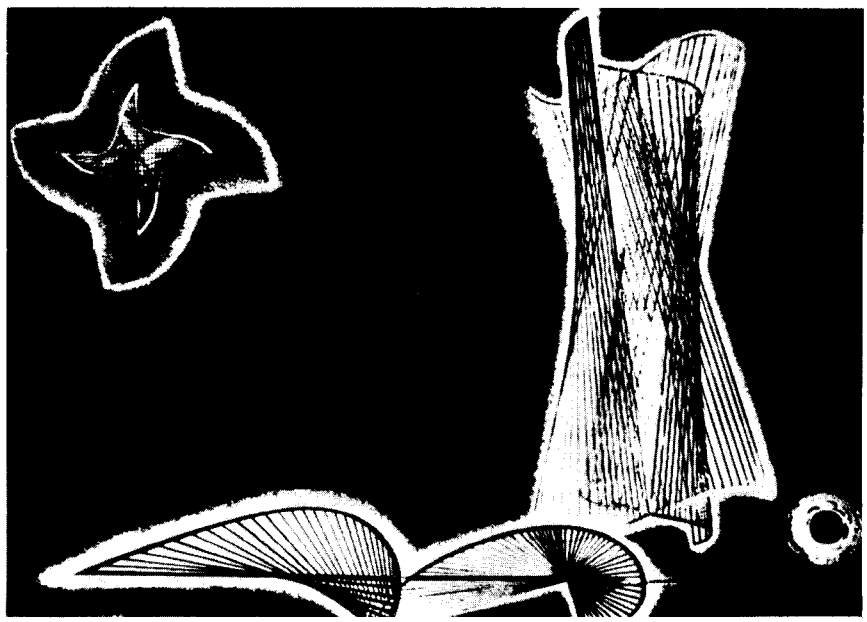
I visited this last group in October 1967 in that rather melancholy and very European city, Leningrad. It had found temporary residence in the Fortress of Peter and Paul, on the bank of the Neva. I entered through the 18th-century House of Engineers where, in anticipation of the 50th anniversary of the October Revolution, many decorations, slogans and illuminations were being prepared. Someone had had the idea that Leningrad, as the cradle of the Revolution, ought to put on something extraordinary in honor of the occasion. The committee in charge had hit upon the light-and-motion displays of the Dvizhenie group.

No outsider was allowed to enter the long wing of the House of Engineers where the kinetic artists were working night and day. However, my guide produced a card which opened this door, too. The first room contained a podium on which a model of the whole display was laid out. In front of the "Finland Station" construction stood a statue of Lenin on which a film of moving lights and colors was to be projected. We walked along a corridor lined with cubicles full of materials, tools, people sitting on camp-cots, and tables cluttered with drawing paper, pots and pans, small gas cooking stoves, and even toothbrushes. At the end of the corridor, one entered a large hall equipped with radio-electronic gear, projectors, reflectors, and a small stage for kinetic exhibits.

It was nine o'clock in the morning, and already the place was humming with activity. Galina Bitt, the actor Buturlin, N. Kuznetsov, Francisco Infante (the genius of the group), and others were rushing about like so many excited children enthusiastically playing a game directed by an elder brother. The brother in this case was Lev Nusberg, the dynamic general planner, whose work-style revealed the drive of an industrial manager. Nusberg assigned the tasks for the day and then hurried off to an electronics plant to direct the assembly of a great luminous mobile.

That evening we visited with Nusberg. A bit tired, with a pan of slightly-burned macaroni on his knee and sipping the eternal glass of tea, he

[6] On the work of the Beliutin group, see Sjeklocha and Mead, *op. cit.*, pp. 85-88.



The Dvizhenie Group—Lumino-kinetic configuration, 1965 (photo by author).

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asked me for news of Le Parc, Colombo, and Schöffer, with all of whom he keeps in touch. Then he went on to describe the work of the Dvizhenie group in these terms:

Kinetic art organically unites the various traditional art forms, at the same time imparting to them a different character from that with which we are familiar. In kineticism there will be sounds, but no music in the usual sense. You will hear words organized rhythmically, singing, but it will not be literature, nor recitation, nor propaganda. There will be changing colored lights, but the effect will be very different from painting. The spatial structures will have something in common with sculpture and architecture—that is, they will exist in space—but their form will be continually changing. The techniques of film and television will have their place in the ensemble. There will be changes of odor and heat, movements of gases and liquids which will shine with colored light—exploiting radio-electronics, chemistry, programming devices to direct radiations, and finally plastic elements in electromagnetic fields. . . .

I asked Nusberg how it happened that his nonconformist art group had been allowed to produce the display for the 50th anniversary celebration. "Well," he replied, "I guess it was just by chance or coincidence. Leningrad wanted to trump Moscow by putting on something spectacular and new. So we are preparing this luminescent display centered around the figure of Lenin." I congratulated Nusberg and remarked that it probably meant his group would earn enough money to last for a year at least. "Oh, no, we won't," he replied. "We hardly break even. They give us a place to work and pay us by the hour at workers' wages." "But that's exploitation!" I exclaimed. "Yes," he answered, "all our friends are a bit surprised. But we don't belong to the Artists' Union, so we have no rights. After all, we are glad just to be provided with the materials we need. We couldn't possibly get them otherwise, since they can only be obtained from factories. What is important is that we are doing something. One cannot go on forever just sketching dreams and putting them in the drawer." "But how is it possible for you extreme modernists to be invited to do something official?" I persisted. Nusberg smiled. "They are treating us not as artists but as young electrotechnicians indulging in a hobby. Better that way. Even in Moscow, some of our models were recently shown in an exhibit—in the applied art section, along with embroidered cloths and enameled pots."

* * *

ONE COULD WRITE a book about the bizarre living problems and moral compulsions of the Russian avant-garde. But such a book could equally be written about the young men in the cellars of Prague and Warsaw—and even about the young Bohemians in Paris and New York. All of them are exponents of new ideas, live in conflict with prevailing conventions, and are rejected by the official guardians of art. The special "privilege" of the Soviet and East European avant-garde is to be the object of the vigilance of the state. Moral considerations play a large part in their activity, but their decisive motivation is simply the compulsion to express themselves with strength and sincerity. The traditional messianic outlook of Russian artists has now taken the form of a fanatical modernism.

While the avant-garde artists of Moscow differ considerably among themselves in technique and style, they share some basic attitudes. Their common opposition to the official conception of art leads them to disavow taboos and dogma in other areas of life. They also share the penalties for these attitudes. Their ability to exhibit their work and communicate their ideas is severely restricted. Denial of membership in the Artists' Union forces them into various secondary occupations[7] which leave them little time and energy to devote to serious art.

Finally, the regime purposely tries to break their spirit by forcing them into poverty and squalor. At the same time, they are offered the chance of living in comfort, and even luxury, *if* they change their opinions and attitudes. But in most cases, the temptation is rejected, and the young artists persevere out of a firm belief in the justice of their position. They refuse to barter away their ideals in exchange for material comforts. They belong to that elite of modern artists who see as their field of investigation the whole of life. They bring to Soviet society, in spite of official barriers, a broad sense of the contemporary and a consciousness of the continuity and variety of world art.

Making my way through Moscow from one dreary cubicle or cellar to another, I had many depressing experiences. Yet, in the end, I came away amazed and uplifted. If the bureaucrats had their way, the studios of the avant-garde would be transformed into places of house-arrest. Instead they have become private enclaves of "internal emigration" where projects are being prepared for a future world of spiritual and artistic freedom.

[7] Avant-garde artists sometimes resort to conventional art as their "secondary occupation." Some of them have become candidates for membership in the Artists' Union on the basis of their conventional, not their authentic, works.

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Reviews in Brief

Men of the Past

DAVID SHUB: *Politicheskiie deiateli Rossii, 1850-ykh—1920-ykh gg.* (Russian Political Figures from the 1850's to the 1920's). New York, The New Review, 1669.

IN THIS RICHLY documented collection of essays, David Shub, the noted biographer of Lenin, recalls some of the democratic and humanist elements in Russia's prerevolutionary political heritage, both Marxian and non-Marxian. The first chapter, on precursors of *narodnichestvo* (populism), contains a section on Piotr Lavrov, the versatile colonel of artillery, mathematician, cultural historian, and member of the "*Zemlia i volia*" (Land and Freedom) society, who observed in 1874 that every dictatorship in history "has spent more time, effort, and energy on the struggle for power with its rivals than in using that power to achieve its program." The Lavrov quotation, like many of those from Herzen, Lenin, Gorky, and other authors are not to be found in published Soviet sources.

Mr. Shub also ranges through Russian forerunners of Lenin (Zaichnevsky, Tkachev, Bakunin, Nechaev and Plekhanov), the liberal movement and the First Duma, Russian socialism and the 1914 war, and the "Parvus" affair; he includes commentaries on Lenin and the Bolsheviks by such figures as Plekhanov, Kropotkin and Gorky, as well as perspectives on the Jewish role in the Revolution.

Of particular interest is a chapter devoted to the later years of Vladimir Korolenko, who died in 1921. An early foe of the reactionary and antisemitic Black Hundreds (he attended every session of the trial of Mendel Beilis, accused of "ritual murder," and helped rally support for him), Korolenko incurred Lenin's displeasure by condemning Bolshevik forms of oppression after 1917. In 1920, Lenin sent Lunacharsky to Poltava to reason with Korolenko, but this mission merely produced a new indictment of Bolshevism in the form of a series of letters written by Korolenko to the People's Commissar. Shub quotes extensively from the letters, one of which proclaims: "Such things as freedom of conscience, assembly, speech, and the press are, for European proletarians, not mere 'bourgeois prejudices' but necessary tools which mankind has arrived at only through lengthy and not unfruitful struggle and progress. Only you who have never fully known these freedoms nor learned to use them jointly with the people can call them 'bourgeois prejudice.'"

While it is regrettable that this work has not yet been translated into English, its publication in Russian has the virtue of preserving the original versions of many materials not available from Soviet sources. Mr. Shub's style is lucid and concise, and the inclusion of source references in the text helps to compensate for the lack of a bibliography.

James Critchlow

Portrait of a Statesman

ROBERT F. BYRNES: *Pobedonostsev, His Life and Thought.* Bloomfield, Indiana University Press, 1968.

IN 1881, WHEN Alexander III was setting government policy on a new course, his attitude was decisively influenced by Konstantin Petrovich Pobedonostsev. Yet, as the abundant bibliography of this book reveals, Western scholars have rarely studied this figure in his own right, and Professor Byrnes demonstrates what a rich seam has been neglected.

Pobedonostsev rose rapidly in his career: first a professor of civil law, then a Senate official, he became tutor to Alexander II's eldest son and heir in 1861, at the age of 34. The Tsarevich died four years later, but by then Pobedonostsev's reputation for intellectual clarity and erudition were well established, and he was retained as tutor to the new heir and future Tsar, Alexander III. By then, too, his philosophy had matured and would undergo only slight revision during the last 40 years of his life.

The author opens with a survey of Pobedonostsev's parents, grandparents, and ten siblings, drawing a parallel between his friendless, impersonal home-life and his later life as the cold and remote *éminence grise*. Paradoxically, in spite—or because—of this upbringing, Pobedonostsev made the family the very keystone of his philosophy, which may be briefly defined as repressive paternalism combined with acid contempt for "progressive" notions.

His personal tragedy was that, although he trained himself to strive for meticulous scholarship, he became intellectually dishonest in his later years, stooping even to plagiarism. A man of contradictions, he believed that society would survive only by dedicating itself to the pursuit of truth and justice, though these goals were hardly in keeping with his pessimistic view of mankind. His intense religious belief focused on human frailty and sinfulness and was perhaps his clearest affinity with Dostoevsky, whom he knew well from 1871 until the novelist's death.

The last ten years of Pobedonostsev's life, from 1896 onward, were marked by steady decline. Although he continued to hold views on policy, they

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were neither solicited nor considered. The industrialization fostered by Count Sergei Witte, the minister of finance, was not influenced by Pobedonostsev, although—surprisingly—he regarded it as desirable for Russia. At length he became the object of constant criticism and, worn out by it all, his health became very delicate. Indeed, he was sickly all his life and increasingly obsessed by the thought of death. Byrnes suggests that sickness and death colored (or discolored) his view of the world. Society, he believed, was collapsing, and the state could but delay the end.

In spite of the rather flat tone of Byrnes' prose, this book is valuable as much for its treatment of Tsarist institutions as for its penetrating portrait of a man who spent his life among them.

Harold Shukman

A Reluctant Interventionist

RICHARD H. ULLMAN: *Britain and the Russian Civil War, November 1918-February 1920.* Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1968.

EARLY IN 1966, all official British papers up to 1922 were suddenly made public. Professor Ullman, having already completed the final draft of the second and concluding volume of his study of Anglo-Soviet relations from 1917 to 1921, scrapped his manuscript and proceeded gamely to the task of extending his work to a trilogy, with this as the second part. The result has justified his effort. Scholars will henceforth be able to draw upon brilliantly digested summaries of all the pertinent documentary as well as monographic and other secondary materials. At the same time, the author has wrought the best-integrated account of the civil war to date—not too surprising when one considers what a significant role the British played in it.

Ullman records the words and deeds of every British policy-maker and military man of consequence. He focuses his attention on the British War Cabinet (its Eastern Committee, in particular), on the Imperial War Cabinet, and on the sessions of the peacemakers in Paris; and he reports as well on the generals and admirals and members of British missions in North Russia, South Russia, Transcaucasia, Siberia, and the Baltic countries. His judgments are sound, and the lessons he draws from the British experience of fifty years ago are still worth bearing in mind today.

Britain came to lead the intervention by default and found herself saddled with a war in which she had no vital interest. Top political figures considered the Whites to be little better than the Reds and felt that, if the Russians wanted to fight one another, they should be allowed to do so. Adding to the difficulties of intervention was its prohibitive cost and the hostility to it of large sectors of British opinion. Even Churchill, most determined of anti-Bolsheviks, had to admit that a conscript army could not be raised to fight in Russia. By November 1918, when Germany surrendered, Britain was tired of history's most grueling war. But it was just then that the decision to support the White cause had to be made.

Marginal motives prompted the British to remain upon the scene for another year or so. These included the oil of Baku, the moral commitment to the Whites, and an interest, largely because it would weaken Russia, in supporting the independence-seeking national groups of the former Romanov Empire. This halfhearted venture was further attenuated by symptoms of ambivalence, typical of a democratic country that intervenes in a civil war without being certain which side the population actually favors. These symptoms included the feeling that local anti-Communist forces should somehow supply a sufficient number of their own troops, and the utopian hope that a moderate leftist group would come forth and create democratic order out of chaos. In addition, there was the usual bickering among political personalities, as well as frequent breakdowns of communication between wavering civilian authorities, who were re-

Reviewers in This Issue

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sponsive to the public mood at home, and the hardheaded military men in the field, who were trying to perform their duties with inadequate resources amid confusing instructions.

Stanley W. Page

Communism in Europe

R. V. BURKS, ED.: *The Future of Communism in Europe.* Detroit, Wayne, State University Press, 1968.

THIS VOLUME, based upon the 1967 Franklin Memorial Lectures at Wayne State University, is both timely and thought-provoking. The five individual contributions share a common focus in their attempt to provide "the elements of a forecast on communism in Europe." The overall approach recognizes distinctions within European communism (e.g., between ruling and non-ruling parties and between Soviet and East European practices) and stresses the gulf between European communism and communism in the developing countries. Whatever the future for the latter, the book has no difficulty demonstrating that Communist parties in Europe are in trouble, at least when measured against their original revolutionary aspirations.

To begin with, Kevin Devlin's chapter on the "Prospects for Communism in Western Europe" marshals substantial evidence concerning the inroads of revisionism on the non-ruling parties and concludes that the "trends of revisionist adaptation" will continue "to characterize Western European communism as a whole." Next, Michael Petrovich surveys the "Yugoslav Heresy," but—perhaps wisely—stops short of offering an answer to a basic question that he himself poses, namely, whether "a society can be both collectivist and democratic." Gregory Grossman follows with a masterfully incisive analysis of the "interplay of economics and politics" and its effect on the prospects for economic reform in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. Grossman's discussion emphasizes the reformist challenge to what he terms the "concept of a solidary society," which has traditionally denied legitimacy to special interests and has thus served as a "pillar of the command economy." Given this quite fundamental philosophical challenge, and considering the threat posed by economic reform to vested political interests, Grossman questions whether any government in Eastern Europe, including the Soviet government, will prove "strong enough to carry out consistently a far-reaching economic reform in the face of internal hazards and opposition, even if it *wanted* to do so." And he seriously doubts that mere tinkering with the economy can "bring the desired dividends."

Much the same pessimism pervades Arnold Horelick's impressive contribution entitled "Fifty Years After October: Party and Society in the USSR." In Horelick's view, Soviet political development has been arrested by the deadweight of the party machine, which has thus far succeeded in guarding the perquisites of power against potential competitors and has stifled the creative forces in Soviet society. Almost as an afterthought, however, Horelick suggests that innovations in Eastern Europe may spread to the USSR and thus set such forces in motion.

In the aftermath of the Soviet move against Czechoslovaia, Horelick's *ex occidente lux* hypothesis no longer seems quite so viable. Although perspectives may change once again, for the moment it seems more likely that the Soviet Union will determine the future of communism in Eastern Europe rather than *vice versa.* What, then, of communism in Western Europe? To be sure, "de-Kremlinization" and "deradicalization" are still on the agenda, but neither process may turn out to be quite so consistent as might have appeared only a short while ago. In this connection, R. V. Burks' concluding chapter on "The Transmutation of European Communism," while eminently solid in all other respects, manages to skirt one vital issue. As Burks sees it, "the revolutionary heritage of Lenin and Stalin is passing from Europe to Asia, where it finds new life in the doctrines of Mao Tse-tung. Extremism is passé in Europe."

Perhaps. But the Communists have never held a monopoly on "extremism" in Europe—East or West. Now, more than ever, they are being put on the spot by "extremist" forces that have not donned the Communist mantle. Obsolete communism? It might be well to bear in mind the new extremism that has burst upon the European scene raising that very question as a battle cry of its own. What, indeed, will be the practical political consequences of this development for antiquated parties that have not yet completed their transition from revolution to revisionism?

Melvin Croan

Sino-Soviet Confrontation?

HARRISON E. SALISBURY: *War Between Russia and China.* New York, W. W. Norton, 1969.

IN TERMS OF political analysis, *War Between Russia and China* is probably Mr. Salisbury's finest effort to date. Remarkably readable, an excellent introduction to Sino-Soviet relations, the book contains a number of penetrating observations concerning the Soviet Union's military posture towards China along the Sino-Mongolian frontier, which the author visited in the spring of 1969. Salisbury also describes a number of brusque encounters between Chinese and Russians at diplomatic meetings that he attended during his frequent stays in the USSR over the last decade. The result is an original and—to this reader—persuasive statement on the potential causes and probable course of a war between China and the Soviet Union.

The cardinal geopolitical position which Salisbury attributes to the Mongolian People's Republic may surprise some analysts. Citing the frequent allusions in recent Russo-Chinese polemics to Genghis Khan and the 13th-Century Mongol invasion of China, Salisbury agrees with Genghis' dictum that Mongolia is "the hinge of the earth"—or at least the "heartland" of the most populous of continents. Earlier Soviet military campaigns against the Japanese in the Sino-Mongolian frontier lands during 1939 and 1945 are regarded by the author as the likely models of a contemporary "preemptive" thrust against the Chinese—which may this time be preceded by nuclear bombardment.

Salisbury maintains that at bottom the dispute is a racial one: "Russian terror and Rusian hatred of the peoples of yellow hue and slant eyes are too deep to be hidden." It is this "fervor

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of racial chauvinism" which in Salisbury's judgment is ultimately responsible for the present state of Sino-Soviet relations.

Compounding this historic antagonism in the 1950's was the Soviet Union's manipulation of the Korean conflict, which Salisbury believes to have been inspired by Stalin in an effort to encircle Mao in a Russian nutcracker. This chapter, somewhat unfortunately titled "The Secret History of the Korean War," is one of the book's best.

Given the generally judicious tenor of Mr. Salisbury's observations, it is surprising to find him somewhat less than impartial in assessing the significance of what is now perhaps the most serious factor in the Sino-Soviet border dispute—namely, the Chinese population problem. Salisbury here totally—if not blindly—subscribes to a Chinese *Lebensraum* theory justifying the "rectification of frontiers." Because of Mao's need for arable land, his confrontation with the USSR "emerges as a logical and intelligent exercise of policy."

One must disagree with Salisbury that the current Chinese effort marginally to increase its 3,768,726 square miles of territory through the forcible seizure of lands held by the Russians for over a century is either "logical" or "intelligent"—even without considering the nuclear issue, which of course is very much the issue. One must also disagree that the *Lebensraum* approach is the best solution to China's shortages of food and capital. Salisbury himself admits that the same problems confront India. Indeed, such problems, almost by definition are common to all underdeveloped countries. Would all of them be justified, therefore, in pursuing a policy of territorial aggrandizement?

The policy decision confronting China is not, as Salisbury maintains, "starve or fight" but rather "cooperate or fight." China, unlike India, has succeeded in alienating all potential sources—Communist and non-Communist—of capital and food. It is this failure of Chinese foreign policy and not the lack of arable land which gave rise to the current preoccupation with *Lebensraum* that may yet lead to a nuclear war. As Salisbury notes, "China has not been so isolated from the outer world since before the Europeans battered down the doors of the port cities in the early 19th century."

With respect to the outcome of such a war, there is some confusion in Salisbury's book as to who would be the likely victor. In the early chapters he raises the specter of "a new Communist colossus" in which the USSR would command the joint resources of Russia's industry and technology and China's population." In the final chapters, however, it is evident that he does not believe that the USSR could emerge "victorious" from a "People's War" conducted on so vast a territory. Some readers may suspect that Salisbury underestimates the potency of nuclear weapons—the use of which, according to the author, would be *de riguer* for both sides—against guerrilla or partisan formations.

These criticisms aside, Salisbury's book offers, to this reviewer at least, the most convincing argument that the Soviet regime, confronted by increasing divisiveness and discontent at home, may yet embark upon a nationalist war in order to rally the nation around it. More than sixty years ago, Tsar Nicholas II, having failed to enact meaningful social, political and economic reforms, plunged his country into a disastrous Asian war in a desperate effort to achieve national unity. It will surely be one of the supreme ironies of history if the Soviet leaders choose to follow in their predecessor's footsteps.

Mr. Salisbury's book constitutes the most original analysis of Sino-Soviet relations since the work done by Donald Zagoria almost a decade ago.

William J. Parente

Welfare under Socialism

BERNICE Q. MADISON: *Social Welfare in the Soviet Union.* Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1968.

THIS VOLUME by Dr. Madison, Professor of Social Work at San Francisco State College, is the result of many years of research, some of it conducted in the Soviet Union itself. The author's visits to the USSR and her knowledge of Russian enabled her to study case histories and other sources not usually investigated by Western scholars.

Dr. Madison describes social welfare policy under the Tsars, under Lenin and Stalin, and under Stalin's successors, giving us a comprehensive account of developments in many areas of social concern: social insurance, public assistance, health programs, maternity and child-care services, veterans' benefits, housing, education, and the penal system. She notes that social services are still a good deal more extensive in urban than in rural areas of the Soviet Union, but that attempts are being made to narrow the gulf between town and country.

Perhaps the author's most interesting observation is that the USSR, after making repeated attempts to find "Marxist-Leninist" solutions to its social problems, has deemed it necessary to return to so-called "capitalist-bourgeois" concepts concerning family life and the roles of parent and child, hard work and its material rewards, and other old-fashioned notions of ethics and morality.

Dr. Madison's book contains interesting information on Soviet approaches to social welfare that differ fundamentally from those in the US. For example, in the Soviet Union there is almost no interest in research and analysis, nor is there really a field of "professional social work." Much of the work is done by unpaid volunteers having the responsibility for recognizing and trying to solve the problems of fellow factory-workers and their families. Furthermore, the avowed purpose of Soviet social welfare services is not primarily to help the individual for his own sake, but rather to enable him to pursue gainful work as soon as practicable.

Official denials notwithstanding, the author found evidence of many of the social ills that are present in Western countries, such as alcoholism and juvenile delinquency, among others. She also considers Soviet social insurance benefits to be inadequate, although this is hotly contested by Soviet authorities accustomed to proclaiming the superiority of their insurance system, primarily because the workers make no direct contributions to it. The book's final chapter is an illuminating discussion of what the US and the Soviet Union could learn from each other in the field of social welfare, and also of what developing countries could learn from Soviet experience.

Social Welfare in the Soviet Union is the most objective, scholarly, and comprehensive study of its kind to date. A lengthy bibliography is appended for the benefit of readers who

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may wish to investigate a particular segment of this broad subject in more detail. The volume should attract a large readership, not least among people who have an interest, but not necessarily an extensive background, in this field.

Robert J. Myers

A Voice from the Ukraine

The Chornovil Papers. Compiled by Vyacheslav Chornovil. Introduction by Frederick C. Barghoorn. New York, McGraw-Hill, 1968.

THE "PAPERS" of Vyacheslav Chornovil, a young Ukrainian journalist imprisoned in Lvov in November 1967, constitute a unique collection of documents on the current state of Ukrainian nationalism in the Soviet Union. The documents, dated between 1965 and 1967, consist of Chornovil's own numerous petitions and appeals to the Soviet authorities on behalf of persecuted Ukrainian intellectuals; of biographic sketches of several Ukrainians whom Chornovil interviewed at length before they were sentenced to prison terms for "bourgeois-nationalistic activities"; and of papers written by the defendants themselves. Although no more than 30 names appear in these documents, it emerges that many more members of the Ukrainian cultural elite have been subjected to persecution, ranging from dismissals from their jobs to prison terms of up to five years.

On the face of it, this story of repression looks similar to many others reported extensively in the Western press, such as the "literary trials" in Moscow and other manifestations of neo-Stalinism which have been sweeping the Soviet Union for the last few years. The difference, of course, is that Chornovil's heroes were charged with fostering Ukrainian nationalist sentiments, which was construed as disloyalty, if not treason, to the Soviet state. And although all of them passionately deny this charge (citing Lenin's writings and the Soviet Constitution), it can easily be seen that, from the point of view of the prosecution, the element of divided loyalty was unquestionably present.

The unwillingness of some of the defendants to repent was notable. Indeed, their demands for the dismissal of a Ukrainian cabinet minister and the Prosecutor General of the USSR for violations of Soviet law would have been unheard of even at the height of the "liberal" Khrushchev era.

The actual indictments centered on the possession of "subversive" literature, such as the texts of a speech by Pope Paul and of Eisenhower's remarks at the unveiling of a monument to Taras Shevchenko, the Ukrainian nationalist and poet, in Washington; books and articles dealing with the Russification of the educational system in the Ukraine; correspondence with Ukrainian nationalists in Canada and the United States; and photostats of some old books on the history of the Ukraine. An aggravating circumstance was "group action": gatherings of like-minded people who were presumed to be bent on wresting the Ukraine from Moscow's hegemony.

It is perhaps not accidental that the majority of individuals whose cases unfold in Chornovil's book are of Galician origin, *i.e.*, they hail from that part of the Ukraine which was incorporated in the Polish Republic before World War II and ruled by the Hapsburgs before 1918. Among the Galicians, the awareness of a distinct national identity has always been stronger than among the "Russian" Ukrainian nationalists, whose aims have rarely included full political independence and separation from Russia. Thus it is significant that the Galicians are apparently managing to influence the younger intellectuals from the "Russian" Ukraine with some of their ideas.

It is impossible to tell at what point Moscow views the Ukrainian insistence on a separate cultural identity as a threat to the unity of the Soviet state. Nor do we know the extent of political nationalism in the Ukraine or in other non-Russian areas of the Soviet Union. Nevertheless, there are signs that nationalism is on the rise in the USSR, and that the authorities are reverting to Stalinist methods to suppress it.

Vladîmir Petrov

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The Politics of the Avant-Garde

By Vahan D. Barooshian

Among the significant avant-garde movements of this century, Russian Cubo-Futurism and French Surrealism are strikingly similar in terms of their beliefs, aspirations, and commitments to a distorted concept of Bolshevism. As this article will show, both movements saw Bolshevism not primarily as a political and economic revolt against capitalism but rather as a cultural revolt against "bourgeois" society.[1] They allied themselves with Bolshevism because they projected onto it their own esthetic rebellion. For them, Bolshevism became a means to pursue their own cultural and esthetic ends; for the Bolsheviks, the avant-gardists became a means to further their political ends.

Cubo-Futurism was primarily a poetic movement and had its origins in Cubism and Symbolism. Represented in the prerevolutionary period mainly by Vladimir Maiakovsky, Velimir Khlebnikov, David Burliuk, Vasili Kamensky and Aleksei Kruchionykh, it arose in 1913 as a revolt against literary conventions, reputations and traditions, and as a protest against the moral and cultural disintegration of "bourgeois" society. A passion for shock, action, negation, scandal and demonstration characterized the movement for most of its history.

As political anarchists, the Cubo-Futurists eagerly welcomed and served the Bolshevik Revolution in order to bring about the destruction of "bourgeois" society. At the same time, they viewed a political alliance with Bolshevism as a necessary prelude to the realization of their own esthetic aims. After the Bolshevik seizure of power, the Cubo-Futurists were the only literary group to support Lunacharsky's call for the creation of a state bureau of artistic affairs.[2] Their political stance helped to revitalize and expand their movement, and leading Cubo-Futurists then became the commissars of art in the Department of Fine Arts under Lunacharsky in 1918-19. Working in alli-

[1] This view was shared by some of the Bolsheviks themselves —most notably Trotsky. Needless to add, however, political and economic goals and exigencies eventually vitiated the cultural aims of Bolshevism.

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[2] Gleb Struve rightly points out that there was an "overwhelmingly hostile attitude of the Russian intelligentsia, including the writers, to the new [Bolshevik] regime." See his article, "The Transition from Russian to Soviet Literature," in *Literature and Revolution in Soviet Russia 1917-1962*, M. Hayward and L. Labedz, eds., London, Oxford University Press, 1962, p. 10.

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ance with painters, they got control of many art institutions and established training schools for art and poetry.[3] In Lunarcharsky's view, the "dynamism" and "collectivism" of the Cubo-Futurists were two essential ingredients for the creation of a "proletarian" art.[4] They saw themselves as the artistic vanguard and educator of the proletariat; however, they believed that art and literature were not so much an expression or reflection of ideology as of craftsmanship *(remeslo)*.

The dominant role of the Cubo-Futurists was short-lived. In 1919 their artistic notions and frequent radical attacks on the "cultural heritage" roused the impatience and finally the alarm of Lenin, who ordered them dismissed. Shortly afterward, the Communist Party took up the attack, identifying them with "petty-bourgeois elements" and "advocates of an idealist philosophy hostile to Marxism." [5]

During the 1920's, the Cubo-Futurists—pro-Bolshevik throughout—struggled unsuccessfully to regain their position as the artistic vanguard. In an alliance with Russian Formalist critics (especially Osip Brik and Victor Shklovsky), they remained a very active and extremely influential group. They continued to oppose the party's position that "socialist" literature had to assimilate or develop within the framework of West European and Russian literature. This, along with their emphasis on the need for new literary forms in a new social era, their disrespect for the art of the past, their notion of the artist as a craftsman and producer, their lack of concern about ideology in art, and finally their "bourgeois" origins, made them continually suspect in the eyes of most of the Bolshevik leaders. There were a few exceptions: Trotsky in particular (and Lunacharsky and Bukharin to a lesser extent) supported them and considered their theories "extremely significant and interesting from the point of view of building a socialist culture." Trotsky also agreed with their prognosis of the art of the future.[6] But when Trotsky was removed from the political scene, the party became increasingly hostile to the Cubo-Futurists.

Surrealist Concepts

Surrealism, by contrast, was primarily a French phenomenon; it was a much larger and more radical poetic and art group whose chief figures were, among others, André Breton, Louis Aragon, Paul Eluard, Max Ernst, André Masson and Antonin Artaud. It arose in 1920 as a moral reaction against World War I and "bourgeois" society. While sharing most of the characteristics of the Russian Cubo-Futurists, the Surrealists propounded a theory that was unique in at least one significant respect: they hoped to produce a social transformation through poetic activity. They believed that, since rational human activity had led to a morally outrageous and culturally inferior social order, man's exploration of his dreams, his hallucinatory and hypnotic states, and his irrational subconscious processes would reveal the basic solutions to human and social problems.[7] For the Surrealists, poetry was a mode of knowledge and discovery, an opportunity for penetrating and tapping the unconscious; and because this "mystical" activity was common to all men, the Surrealists aimed, in Eluard's words, "to reduce the differences between men and thus refuse to serve an absurd order based on inequality, deceit and cowardice." [8]

The nature of the Surrealists' social objectives and their contempt for the fundamental "rationality" of bourgeois society were in large part responsible for their gravitation toward Bolshevism and their ultimate political commitment to it. In a conversation with Lunacharsky in 1923, Aragon and Breton expressed their violent hostility towards bourgeois society, whose most abominable and stifling feature, in their view, was its belief in reason as the basic principle of the universe. For the Surrealists, this reliance on rationalism served to stifle a tremendous and arcane spontaneity which only the "principle of intuition" could penetrate and which the artist could grasp by "seeing things in their surrealist significance." The Surrealists wished "to topple the kingdom of the bourgeoisie and

[3] Viacheslav Polonsky aptly described this phenomenon: "From the cellars of Bohemia the Russian Futurists were brought to the luxurious halls of the academies. The Futurists were in power." *Ocherki literaturnovo dvizheniia revoliutsionnoi epokhi*, Moscow-Leningrad, 1929, p. 26.

[4] See K. Zelinsky, *Na rubezhe dvukh epokh*, Moscow, 1959, p. 118.

[5] See "Khronika literaturnoi zhizni," in *Istoriia russkoi sovetskoi literatury 1917-1929*, Vol. 1, Moscow, 1958, p. 574.

[6] Leon Trotsky, *Literature and Revolution*, Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 1960, pp. 134, 249. This work was originally written in 1923. Lenin's attitude to the Cubo-Futurists was ambiguous or confused, or both. According to Gorky, his "attitude to Maiakovsky was one of mistrust and even irritation" because of the poet's verbal play and alleged incomprehensibility. Lenin once castigated Lunacharsky for being partial toward the Cubo-Futurists and for publishing too many copies of one of Maiakovsky's plays. Yet when Maiakovsky, in one of his poems, criticized the obsession of party members with conferences, Lenin remarked: "I do not belong to the admirers of his poetic talent, although I fully admit my incompetence in this field. . . . I don't know about the poetic angle, but I can vouch that the politics is absolutely right." See *Lenin: The Man, the Theorist, the Leader*, Leonard Schapiro and Peter Reddaway, eds., London, Pall Mall Press, 1967, pp. 50-52.

[7] See André Breton, "Manifeste du Surréalisme (1924)," in his *Manifestes du Surréalisme*, Paris, Pauvert, 1962, p. 40.

[8] Quoted in Claude Mauriac, *André Breton*, Paris, Édition de Flore, 1949, p. 17.

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at the same time the kingdom of reason, so as to restore the great kingdom of the life of spontaneity, so as to dissolve the world in the music of an existence of intensity." Since the Asian continent was presumably unsullied by European rationalism, it became an object of near-veneration. Aragon and Breton called upon the Soviets to lead Asia to the destruction of "bourgeois pseudo-culture," even if it meant the destruction of the Surrealists themselves, so long as reason and the "all-strangling principle of bourgeoisie" were also destroyed in the onslaught.[9]

The Surrealists' notion of the aims of the Bolshevik Revolution represented the very antipode of the concepts of Lenin, Trotsky and other Bolshevik leaders.[10] Commenting on his conversation with Aragon and Breton in 1923, Lunacharsky observed that it required a considerable effort to overcome the Surrealists' "amazement and even indignation" when told how utterly mistaken they were about the aims of the Bolsheviks. The Revolution, he informed his interlocutors, had nothing in common with "any Asiatic mystical metaphysics": it was an extension of reason guided by, and committed to, Western civilization, whose best fruit was Marxism, the apogee of dialectical reason and a higher form of science which Bolshevism intended to bring to the West.[11]

Troubled Alliance

Notwithstanding Lunacharsky's admonitions, the Surrealists declared allegiance to Bolshevism and joined the French Communist Party in 1925. This political commitment gave new momentum, vitality and solidarity to their movement, just as it had to the Cubo-Futurists in 1917. Like the Cubo-Futurists, the Surrealists continued to believe that Bolshevism mirrored their own "surreal" and cultural revolution.

In an almost ecstatic review of Trotsky's biography of Lenin, Breton remarked that Bolshevism, as an organized political system, had manifested its superiority by consummating a vast social upheaval in a relatively brief period. The Surrealists, he said, had to embrace Bolshevism wholeheartedly if they seriously expected to achieve their cultural and spiritual objectives. For Breton, the Bolsheviks were the supreme revolutionary avatars who had reached the "acme of their Destiny" by executing their revolutionary will. As he saw it, the Bolsheviks had not abandoned their aims of extending their revolution to Western Europe, and would immediately respond to a genuine revolutionary call.[12] In that event, Breton and the Surrealists apparently assumed they would become the new cultural arbiters, a role which "bourgeois" society, they felt, had denied them.

Despite the Surrealists' distorted and essentially self-serving view of Bolshevism, their profound hostility to bourgeois society had led Lunacharsky and Trotsky to encourage their allegiance.[13] Curiously, however, their commitment to Bolshevism created suspicion and even aversion within the French Communist Party, even though it was an obedient servant of the Comintern. Much as in the case of the Cubo-Futurists, the Surrealists' bourgeois origins, their Bohemianism, their refusal to submit to party work and strict discipline and to abandon their poetic aims and notions, and their passion for dissent and protest, aroused doubt about the Surrealists' reliability or loyalty as party members. As volatile enemies of "bourgeois" society, however, they were tolerated and supported by the party, whatever its misgivings.[14]

Political commitment soon posed a test for the Surrealists as the Bolsheviks began to mobilize West European intellectuals for revolutionary struggle. For what was at stake was the very integrity of Surrealist art, viewed by its proponents as a means of profound inquiry into the human condition, in the face of the party's efforts to transform it into an instrument of political propaganda and to create a "proletarian"

[9] All quotations in the paragraph are from Anatoli Lunacharsky, *Sobranie sochinenii v vosmi tomakh*, Vol. 1, Moscow, 1966, p. 488. See also "Lettres aux écoles du Bouddha," *La révolution surréaliste* (Paris), No. 3, April 1925, p. 22. Breton and the Surrealists wrote to the French Ambassador to Japan in 1925: "We wish with all our might that the revolutions, the wars, the colonial insurrections, will annihilate this Western civilization, the evil of which you defend as far as the Orient; and we call the destruction of this state of affairs the one our minds would be the most likely to accept." See Mauriac, p. 14.

[10] For example, Trotsky wrote: "Essentially, the [Bolshevik] Revolution means the people's final break with the Asiatic, with the 17th Century, with Holy Russia, with ikons and roaches. It does not mean a return to the pre-Peter era, but on the contrary, it means a communion of the entire people with civilization and a reconstruction of the material foundations in accordance with the interests of the people." Quoted from Trotsky, *Literature and Revolution*, p. 94.

[11] Lunacharsky, *op. cit.*, p. 489.

[12] André Breton, "Leon Trotsky: Lénine," *La révolution surréaliste*, No. 5, October 1925, pp. 31-32. Breton seriously entertained the extension of the Bolshevik Revolution to France. David Caute notes that Breton "longed to see the Cossacks watering their horses on the Concorde": *Communism and the French Intellectuals 1914-1960*, New York, Macmillan, 1964, p. 94.

[13] Lunacharsky, for example, observed that "the Surrealists have rightly understood that the task of all revolutionary intellectuals under a capitalist regime is to denounce bourgeois values. Their efforts deserve to be encouraged." Quoted in Robert S. Short, "The Politics of Surrealism, 1920-1936," *Journal of Contemporary History* (London), No. 2, 1966, p. 18.

[14] See Short, *op. cit.*, pp. 10-14.

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literature in France, the Soviet Union, America, and other countries.[15]

In 1928 the French Communist Party assigned the novelist Henri Barbusse the task of creating a weekly cultural review called *Monde*, which received heavy financial support from the Comintern. The purpose of the review was to attract and win over leftist writers and intellectuals, to counter the hostility of the general press and professional organizations toward the leftists, and to displace *Clarté*,[16] which Barbusse had lost to the Trotskyists after it had initially been a party organ. Another purpose of *Monde* was to encourage the growth of a "proletarian" literature in France, to urge "intellectuals to lead the Communist movement toward a new, popular art which would come with the liberation of the masses. . . ." [17]

The notion of a "proletarian" literature met with intrepid resistance from the Surrealists. Replying to inquiries from *Monde*, Breton said that he simply could not envisage the possibility of creating in France an art that would express the aspirations of the proletariat. He believed that a writer shaped by bourgeois society was unable to interpret those aspirations. That a writer could have some notion of them Breton did not deny. Sincerity and sensibility were possible, too. But not unlike the Russian Futurists and Formalists, Breton saw the writer's work as a product of literary evolution and of "dialectical materialism," which determined its validity within that evolution. To reject this determinism, Breton suggested, would be anti-Marxian. In short, Breton felt that the rise of a "proletarian" literature could only come with the rise of a proletarian culture.[18] As to when that would happen, Breton quoted Trotsky:

Vague theories of proletarian culture, conceived by analogy and antithesis with bourgeois culture, are the result of comparisons between proletariat and bourgeoisie, comparisons to which the critical mind is completely alien. It is certain that a moment will come in the development of the new society when economy, culture, will have the greatest freedom of progressive movement. But we can only make fancy conjectures about this. In a society that will be pruned of the crushing worry of daily bread; where communal laundries will wash everybody's good linen; where the children, all the children, well-fed, healthy and gay, will absorb the elements of science and art, as well as the air and sunlight; where there will no longer be any useless mouths; where the liberated egoism of man—a formidable power—will tend only to knowledge, to the transformation and improvement of the universe: in that society, the dynamism of culture will be incomparable to anything that we have known in the past. But we shall reach it only after long and painful transition, which is almost completely before us.[19]

It seems obvious that one of the basic appeals of Trotsky's remarks to Breton was the notion of the cultural transformation of society, which fit right into the Surrealist credo.

The Course of Alienation

For the Surrealists, literary developments in Russia in the late 1920's were cause for alarm and, ultimately, disillusionment with Bolshevism. The Russian Association of Proletarian Writers (RAPP), with party backing, persecuted and gradually eliminated other literary groups and individual writers. As it assumed dictatorial power, RAPP dogmatically insisted on the immediate creation of a "proletarian" literature and culture, the fundamentals of which, it claimed, were already manifest even in bourgeois society.[20]

Of special concern to the Surrealists was the bitter literary struggle that was waged between RAPP and the Russian Futurists. The Futurists considered the writer a "craftsman" and "producer" whose work was not unlike other forms of work. They wanted the writer to work for journals, newspapers, factories; to write sketches, diaries, reports and memoirs; in short, to write a "literature of fact" that was in their view far more directly relevant to, and reflective of, the problems of the day than "imaginative" literature. They believed that "imaginative" literature was an intrinsically solitary art form that alienated the writer from the building of "socialism" and, as Boris Kushner observed, from "direct and immediate participation in

[15] For an excellent treatment of this approach as it was applied to the United States, see James Gilbert, *Writers and Partisans: A History of Literary Radicalism in America*, New York, Wiley, 1968, pp. 75-85.

[16] In 1921, Barbusse organized *Clarté* as a "Center of International Revolutionary Education." It was committed to the creation of a new social order which would arise from the "radical destruction of the capitalist system" and endure because of the "dictatorial preponderance of the class heretofore exploited and despoiled." Barbusse considered this an "intellectual" task. When Max Eastman of the American Communist journal *Liberator* objected, Barbusse replied that for him there was no distinction between intellectuals and proletarians. See his "In Defense of *Clarté*," *Liberator* (New York), October 1921, p. 30.

[17] Caute, p. 102. See also Jacques Fauvet, *Histoire du parti communiste français*, Vol. 1, Paris, Fayard, 1964, pp. 100-01; and Roger Garaudy, *L'itinéraire d'Aragon*, Paris, Gallimard, 1961, p. 217.

[18] André Breton, "Seconde manifeste," in his *Manifestes du Surréalisme*, pp. 186-87.

[19] *Ibid.*, p. 188.

[20] Herman Ermolaev, *Soviet Literary Theories 1917-1934: The Genesis of Socialist Realism*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1963, p. 58.

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political and cultural work." [21] This whole approach and concept was basically incompatible with RAPP's demand for a new proletarian literature.

While the Surrealists' protest against the concept of proletarian culture was based on different grounds, they regarded the Futurists' long and losing battle as their own. Maiakovsky's suicide in 1930, partly as a protest against RAPP and the increasing regimentation of Soviet life, came as a final blow, demonstrating to the Surrealists that the "atmosphere in Russia was profoundly uncongenial to poetry and spiritually barren . . ." [22] For the Surrealists, Maiakovsky and the Russian Futurists had always represented artists of a "postrevolutionary" situation in which the Surrealists one day hoped to find themselves,[23] and they naturally tended to identify the fate of the Russian Futurists with their own.

This process of identification can be perceived very clearly in an article on Maiakovsky by the Futurists Neznamov and Katanian and in an accompanying commentary by Breton, both published in the Surrealist journal in July 1930.[24] Neznamov and Katanian pointed out that for Maiakovsky poetry was synonomous with life and struggle. In freely choosing to write for the Revolution, Maiakovsky became a "proletarian" poet—not by using the proletariat as a poetic theme, but by taking up its cause:

He learned how to test his works on the masses. He understood that the problem of the masses is actually not only the problem of audience, but also a literary problem, not only the problem of fulfilling a task, but a formal problem as well. This is to say that not being satisfied *to learn to write for the masses,* he learned how to do it with the highest possible value, and this at the expense of his own heart.

The writers ended by claiming that Maiakovsky had taken part in the events of his time as an individual actor whom the Revolution had lost, though just what they meant by "lost" was not really explained.

Breton, however, offered an ingenious and penetrating vindication, if not explanation, of Maiakovsky's suicide. For Breton, Maiakovsky's suicide stemmed from the contradiction or conflict between his desire to be a revolutionary poet and his desire to realize his personal "destiny"—in his case, to find love or to overcome the pain of unrequited love, to which no true revolutionary is immune. Put differently, Maiakovsky's desire to find love in the "present" was much greater than his desire to create for the "future" of the proletariat. The irreconcilability of his conflict led to suicide. Maiakovsky, however, did not betray the Revolution to which he was intellectually committed; rather that commitment was weakened by his desire to love, which Breton saw as characteristic of the "human condition." This irrepressible desire to love, which precluded a total "sentimental" commitment to the Revolution, marked the greatness of Maiakovsky as a revolutionary poet. By the same logic, Breton was perhaps unwittingly providing a justification for the Surrealists' intellectual, but not "sentimental," commitment to the Revolution.

Maiakovsky's suicide also raised the problem of "proletarian" literature. Breton concluded:

More than ever, now that Maiakovsky is dead, we refuse to register the weakening of the spiritual and moral protest which he took up. We deny, and will continue to deny, the possibility of a poetry or an art susceptible of accommodating itself to extremist simplification—"à la Barbusse"—of ways of thinking and feeling. We have yet to be shown a "proletarian" work of art. The enthusiastic life of the struggling proletariat, the stupefying and shattering life of the mind surrendered to its own beastly aspects—as far as we are concerned, it would be an extremely vain wish to want to participate in only one of these dramas. Expect no concession from us in this realm.[25]

As Breton's remarks suggested, "proletarian" art had no relation to the struggling proletariat. It was, however, definitely related to the emergent concept of Soviet "socialist realism," which the party was beginning to enunciate in the late 1920's. The very notion of "proletarian" art or literature was a contradiction in terms since the proletariat possessed no unique or definable culture of its own. As the American critic Philip Rahv perceptively observed, "proletarian" literature had no relation even to revolutionary thought; the principal implication that it entailed for the artist

[21] Boris Kushner, "Prichiny otstavaniia," *Krasnaia nov* (Moscow), No. 11, 1930, p. 132. Kushner, among other Futurists, disappeared in the purges.

[22] Short, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

[23] "Maiakovsky's poems are in themselves a definition, an affirmation of the poet's place in a new order." Elsa Triolet, *Maiakovskii: Vers et proses de 1913 à 1930,* Paris, Éditeurs Français Réunis, 1952, p. 9. See also her "Maiakovskii et nous," *Poésie* (Paris), No. 38, 1947, pp. 8-34. Triolet is the wife of the former Surrealist Louis Aragon, who joined the Communist Party in the early 1930s. In one of his travel sketches, Maiakovsky, who had been given a reception by the Surrealists in Paris in 1927, remarked that they were a vigorous group but wondered if they had a literary "program." He also noticed a similarity between the poetry and manifestos of early Russian Futurism and those of the Surrealists, intimating that the Surrealists were still in a "prerevolutionary" situation. See his *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii,* Vol. VIII, Moscow, 1958 edition, p. 334.

[24] P. Neznamov and V. Katanian, "C'est justement cela, un poète prolétarien," and André Breton,, "La barque de l'amour s'est brisée contre la vie courante," *Le Surréalisme au service de la révolution* (Paris), No. 1, July 1930, pp. 16-22. The title of Breton's article, translated from the Russian, was a line in Maiakovsky's "suicide" poem.

[25] *Ibid.*, p. 22.

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was his alliance with the proletariat and his recognition of the class struggle as the basic fact of social life, thus yoking art and politics. Moreover, the projected concept of "proletarian" literature failed "to define in what way a writer's alliance with the working class is or is not an alliance with a particular party of that class." [26] That was because class and party, according to the theoreticians of "proletarian art," were synonomous. To weld the artist to the Communist Party as a political functionary and to have him produce "party" or "party-minded" literature was the real meaning of "proletarian" literature. In this scheme of things only the party could evaluate the correct—or, to use a Soviet term, "progressive" or "nonprogressive"—orientation of the artist's political outlook, an orientation subject to changes in the party line, to which that outlook would have to conform.[27] This meant the writer's relinquishment of his artistic freedom. In the last analysis there was no basic distinction between "proletarian" literature and Soviet "socialist realism."

Both the Russian Futurists and French Surrealists came to realize the consequences of "proletarian" literature for their art: its utopian mythology and banal schematism threatened the precarious equilibrium they had sought to establish between their political and artistic commitments.

Conclusion

Many intellectuals and writers of the 1920's (and on into the 1930's), outraged by social and cultural decay and by the injustices of modern industrial society, turned to communism for salvation, for some political banner that would liberate them from their bewilderment.[28] But they never seriously pondered the tragic consequences of the destruction of the society that suffered and indeed sanctioned their assaults. To this extent, they were politically naive. Their assaults, moreover, were often of an emotional nature; as the French writer Roger Vailland put it, "We were Trotskyists, really, forever talking about the 'permanent revolution'—unemployed intellectuals more keenly aware of the emotional aspects of rebellion than of revolution." [29]

The reasons for the commitment of intellectuals to communism were surely many, but one stands out in the evidence adduced here. To the Futurists and Surrealists, communism held out the vision that revolutionary struggle and change would bring about a literary and cultural regeneration in which writers and intellectuals could play a leading and even heroic role. The prospect was profoundly appealing—but mythical.

The literary and cultural aims of the Surrealists and Futurists could not, in the final analysis, be reconciled with the political, organizational, material and institutional aims of Bolshevism.[30] As one writer has observed, Bolshevism and "proletarian literature" offered the Surrealists and Russian Futurists two unacceptable alternatives: "supporting a revolutionary regime through esthetic conformity (that is, through ceasing to exist), or attempting to revolutionize [on their own] without any prospect of changing life, in view of the superior forces of the 'professional revolutionists.' Either of these choices could only lead to the end of avant-gardism." [31] In the case of both groups, the break with Bolshevism was hence inevitable.[32]

The apparent dilemma of many avant-garde literary movements is that they cannot remain "revolutionary" by being apolitical. Yet political commitment or involvement is at once their salvation and undoing.

[26] Philip Rahv, "Proletarian Literature: A Political Autopsy," *Southern Review* (Charleston), No. 4, 1939, p. 619.
[27] *Ibid.*, p. 621.
[28] See William Philips and Philip Rahv, "Literature in a Political Decade," in *New Letters*, Horace Gregory, Ed., New York, Norton & Co., 1937, p. 170.
[29] Quoted in Caute, *op. cit.*, p. 96. Clifford Browder observes that Breton's "conversion to Marxism was another instance of a strong subjective enthusiasm, an adherence less intellectual than emotional in nature." *André Breton: Arbiter of Surrealism*, Geneva, Librairie Droz, 1967, p. 123.
[30] See Monas, *op. cit.*, p. 5; and Short, *op. cit.*, p. 21.
[31] Harold Rosenberg, "Collective, Ideological, Combative," *Art News Annual* (New York), No. 34, 1968, p. 78.
[32] Maiakovsky's suicide in 1930 led, by and large, to the dissolution of the Futurist group. The Surrealists' break with the Communist movement came about in the middle 1930's, when one group headed by Breton renounced it, while another group led by Aragon became proponents of the party line. See Short, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

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Soviet Diplomacy in Asia

By Hemen Ray

When Soviet party chief Leonid Brezhnev announced at the international Communist conference in Moscow last June that the Soviet Union intended to promote the creation of a new collective security system in Asia, he left little doubt that one of Moscow's major objectives was to erect barriers to the expansionist ambitions of the USSR's former "fraternal" ally, Communist China. "The combination of the Chinese leaders' political adventurism and the atmosphere of war hysteria continually incited by them," he declared elsewhere in his speech, "is introducing new elements into the international situation which we have no right to ignore." [1]

The speech itself failed to specify what sort of security arrangements Moscow had in mind, but an authoritative commentary already published in *Izvestia* several days earlier provided some vague clues. After accusing Communist China of plotting to jump into the power vacuum to be created by Britain's planned withdrawal of forces from Asia by 1971, and of harboring "definite designs" on a number of China's Asian neighbors, the commentary suggested that the best means for these countries to thwart Peking's ambitions lay in establishing a collective security system of their own. Such a system would have no need of "patrons and guardians" from the West because the Asian countries could count upon the Soviet Union and its socialist allies to "contribute, as they have always done, to every effort helping . . . to ensure a firm and dependable peace and security in Asia." [2]

In view of the strongly anti-Chinese context in which the Brezhnev proposal was put forward, Peking's reaction to it was predictably sharp. Chinese Communist statements denounced the Soviet plan as plainly directed against China, as a "reproduction" of the US-led SEATO alliance, and as "something that the Soviet leaders picked up from the garbage heap" of the late US Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles.[3]

Subsequent Soviet statements sought to counter such charges by presenting the Brezhnev proposal in a more pacific light. A Novosti commentary described it as "an alternative" to military "blocs" and as a means of advancing "peaceful coexistence" rather than "military confrontation." [4] Foreign Minister Gromyko, addressing the Supreme Soviet in July, denied that the Asian security system proposed by Moscow was "aimed against some one country or group of countries," affirming that it involved "the collective efforts of all the states of Asia and the strength-

[1] *Pravda* (Moscow), June 8, 1969.

[2] V. Matveev, "A Filled Vacuum," *Izvestia* (Moscow), May 29, 1969.

[3] New China News Agency, June 28 and July 25, 1969.

[4] Novosti commentary, published in the *National Herald* (New Delhi), July 3, 1969.

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ening of security . . . in the common interest of these states." [5] In a similar statement in September, Premier Aleksei Kosygin declared that the Soviet porposal aimed at uniting peace-loving forces in Asia, not for war but as a barrier against aggressors.[6]

Shortly thereafter, Foreign Minister Gromyko sought to gain United Nations support for the Brezhnev proposal within a framework of regional security arrangements. Addressing the UN General Assembly session in New York, he urged UN members to take "practical steps to establish effective regional security systems in various parts of the world" which would be "based on the joint efforts of all states of the areas concerned" and would "function in keeping with the provisions of the UN Charter." Referring specifically to Asia, Gromyko said that "the very course of events" brought to the fore the question of creating an effective collective security system for the area, and he stressed that the Soviet Union, as "not only a European but also an Asian state," stood ready to promote the project.[7]

The purposes of this Soviet diplomatic maneuver were readily discernible. If the USSR could obtain UN endorsement of the Brezhnev proposal as part of a system of regional security accords within the UN organizational framework, this would give the project an international character and immensely facilitate the attainment of Moscow's objectives, enabling the USSR—as a self-proclaimed Asian power—to assume a leading role in promoting the new Asian security system. At the same time it would keep the United States and Communist China out of the project—the former as a non-Asian power and the latter as a non-member of the UN.

While the outlines of the Asian security system envisaged by Moscow remain nebulous, it would appear that the Soviet leaders do not contemplate a SEATO-type treaty to which the Soviet Union would be a party, but aim instead at an economic, political and military alliance to be set up exclusively by, for and among the Asian countries themselves, without direct Soviet participation. The Soviet Union would, however, act as chief sponsor of the alliance and would seek to play a major, perhaps dominant, role in it by providing advice, as well as economic and arms support, to its members. Viewed more broadly, the Soviet objectives would appear to be to create a belt of nations friendly to the USSR in the vital Asian regions flanking China, to strengthen Soviet influence generally in the area and legitimize it through a formal Asian security arrangement, and thus to bolster the USSR's overall strategic position in Asia vis-a-vis both Communist China and the US.

Stepped-up Soviet diplomatic activity to lay the groundwork for the attainment of these objectives was already evident before Brezhnev's announcement at the Communist party conference. In May of last year, Premier Kosygin visited India, Afghanistan, and Pakistan; in early June, Mikhail Kapitsa, head of the Southeast Asia department of the Soviet Foreign Ministry and a specialist on Chinese affairs, made a tour of Burma, Malaysia, Singapore, Laos, Cambodia and Thailand; and in July-August, a high-level Soviet delegation visited Indonesia. At the end of June, Peking charged that more than twenty Soviet delegations had gone on "conspiratorial missions" to various Asian countries.[8]

Britain's announced intention to withdraw its remaining forces from the Indian Ocean area by 1971 has undoubtedly been a major factor spurring the Soviet diplomatic offensive in Asia. Soviet statements have denied that the USSR seeks to fill the vacuum by substituting a military presence of its own in the area,[9] but there were persistent reports in the Indian press last summer of Soviet overtures to both India and Pakistan aimed at the acquisition of naval base facilities. A reported approach to India for this purpose prompted a statement by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi to the effect that India would never allow its ports to be used as bases by any foreign navy,[10] and shortly before this, Indian newspapers had reported a Soviet offer to Pakistan to develop the port of Gwadur, on the Arabian Sea, with a view to its eventual use as a naval base.[11] Despite Soviet disclaimers of such moves, the recent activity of Soviet naval units in the Indian Ocean and other indications of Soviet interest in obtaining base facilities in the area seem to belie these denials.[12]

One aspect of the Soviet effort to create the necessary "preconditions" for an Asian collective security

[5] *Pravda*, July 11, 1969.
[6] *Times of India* (New Delhi), Sept. 11, 1969.
[7] *Pravda*, Sept. 20, 1969.

[8] New China News Agency, June 28, 1969.
[9] See Novosti commentary, *loc. cit.* (footnote 4).
[10] See *Amrita Bazar Patrika* (Calcutta), July 4, 1969, and *Times of India*, July 4, 1969.
[11] *The Statesman* (New Delhi), June 29, 1969. For Soviet denial of the report, see *Times of India*, July 2, 1969.
[12] The Soviet Union was reported to be maintaining 14 warships in the Indian Ocean and planning to increase their number, as well as to rent naval base facilities at Singapore when the British leave. See Ernest Weatherall, "Soviets Move in on the Indian Ocean," *Christian Science Monitor* (Boston), May 22, 1969; also B.C. Nag, "Big Power Rivalry in Maldives," *National Herald*, June 2, 1969.

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system has been an attempt to promote economic cooperation between India, Pakistan and Afghanistan. During his visit to Pakistan last May, Premier Kosygin stated that his government attached "great significance" to such regional economic cooperation, and he promised Soviet help in promoting it.[13] Apart from the fact that an Asian security system would be unattainable without cooperation between these three antagonistic neighbors, the Soviet effort has the added objective of drawing Pakistan away from Communist China, whom Soviet propaganda has assiduously blamed for Pakistan's sore relations with both Afghanistan and India. Thus, a *Pravda* commentary last June charged Peking with carrying on "dangerous subversive work" in South Asia and seeking to "set at loggerheads Pakistan and Afghanistan, and Pakistan and India." The commentary urged the leaders of the three countries to display their wisdom by joining together to face the "new hegemonic forces in Asia"—*i.e.*, Communist China.[14]

The Soviet diplomatic offensive has also encompassed a variety of political and economic overtures to other Asian countries, including Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Japan, the Philipppines and Taiwan. But while these approaches have had some success in limited areas, mainly trade and economic cooperation, Moscow's idea of an Asian security system under Soviet auspices appears thus far to have been received by practically all the governments concerned with great reserve, except in the single case of Malaysia.

India's reaction, in particular, has been emphatically negative. Prime Minister Indira Gandhi described an alliance of Asian countries as "useless" since an alliance of one group would cause an immediate reaction by another, with a consequent increase of tensions.[15] In other public statements, she voiced India's opposition to any alliance that would appear to be a "ganging up" of nations against Communist China; expressed confidence that China would "pose no real threat to India in spite of the border issue"; and stated that if a vacuum should be created by the British pull-out of forces, it could be filled by the countries of the region without foreign intervention, or "the UN could guarantee the security of the countries affected."[16]

India has also shown scant enthusiasm for Premier Kosygin's suggestion for regional economic cooperation between India, Pakistan and Afghanistan. The government indicated that it would take no initiative to realize the project, although if the Soviet initiative were to show some prospects of success, India would consider joining in.[17] A major reason for New Delhi's coolness toward the Soviet proposals for Asia is Soviet military aid to Pakistan, which has become an increasingly sore point in Indo-Soviet relations.

The pro-Soviet Communist Party of India (CPI) has, of course, welcomed Moscow's proposals for regional economic cooperation as well as for an Asian security system. Speaking at the Communist conference in Moscow last summer, CPI Chairman S. A. Dange stated that the Indian party would continue its efforts towards "converting this area of tension [South Asia] into an area of peace and friendship," and that "the great influence and prestige of the Soviet Union" could be "a decisive force" in achieving this goal.[18] With India's Communists split into pro-Soviet and pro-Chinese factions, however, the CPI lacks the political strength to exert any appreciable influence on government policy.

Pakistan's reaction to the Soviet proposals has been even more negative than India's. While the government has refrained from official comment on the Brezhnev plan for an Asian security system, it has reiterated its intention to strengthen friendly relations with Communist China—signifying, in effect, rejection of the Soviet scheme.[19] Pakistani newspapers which reflect government thinking have been more explicit. The *Morning News* (Karachi) declared editorially that "Pakistan cannot be a party to an anti-Chinese alliance if that be Mr. Brezhnev's object. China is a tried and sincere friend of Pakistan, and to gratuitously forsake friendship with China would be perilous and self-defeating."[20] Similarly, the *Pakistan Times* (Rawalpindi) repudiated Soviet charges that Peking has "expansionist designs" in Asia as sheer propaganda and declared that in view of Pakistan's experience with US-sponsored collective security, "the only safe course open to it is to stay clear of any commitments which have a bearing on 'economic cooperation' or 'collective security'."[21] The Pakistan government also

[13] *Izvestia*, June 1, 1969.
[14] M. Maevsky and A. Filippov, in *Pravda*, June 2, 1969.
[15] Interview published in *Il Giorno* (Milan), Oct. 22, 1969.
[16] *Times of India*, June 28, 1969; *Indian Express* (New Delhi), June 30, 1969; and *The Statesman* (New Delhi), July 3, 1969.
[17] *National Herald*, June 24, 1969.
[18] *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, June 14, 1969.
[19] Visiting Peking in July 1969, Air Marshal Nur Khan, a member of the Pakistan President's Council for Administration, reportedly assured the Chinese leaders that Pakistan would never abandon its friendship with Communist China. New China News Agency report from Peking, July 13, 1969.
[20] June 21, 1969; see also the lead article on June 22.
[21] June 22 and 23 and July 12, 1969.

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rejected officially Moscow's suggestions for regional economic cooperation between Pakistan, India and Afghanistan, indicating that it found "no attraction" in the Soviet proposal because of "political considerations" and Pakistan's differences with India.[22]

Most of the other Asian nations have displayed a similar coolness towards the Brezhnev proposal or have cogent reasons for remaining aloof. Ceylon has rejected it. Burma has always steered clear of talks on collective security for fear of offending Peking. Nepal likewise cultivates friendly relations with Communist China, finding them useful to its bargaining position vis-a-vis India, and is unlikely to risk compromising them. Afghanistan, though it does not flaunt its relations with Peking, finds Communist China a valuable trading partner and a useful lever in dealing with the Soviet Union. Japan, Thailand, and the Philippines remain staunch allies of the United States, and Laos is now leaning towards Washington, while Singapore has begun to look towards Australia and New Zealand. Indonesia, with its insular position, evidently does not feel directly threatened by Communist China and seems inclined to avoid involvement in a patently anti-Chinese alliance.

Thus far, Malaysia has been the sole exception to the generally negative Asian response to the Brezhnev proposal. After several months of official silence on the matter, Deputy Premier Tun Abdul Razak declared in a press interview last September that "the Soviet Union has shown an interest in Malaysia and has offered her hand of friendship not only because she regards Malaysia as a stable and viable country, but also because she appreciates our independent foreign policy." He went on to say that the Southeast Asian countries needed the assistance of the big powers, including the Soviet Union, to guarantee the security of the region, and that Malaysia saw no objection to a Soviet naval presence in the Indian Ocean because this presented no threat to the countries of the area.[23]

Communist China, of course, has made every effort to encourage rejection of the Brezhnev proposal by the Asian countries. In its propaganda to Asia, Peking has assailed the Soviet proposal as "a scheme to make Asians fight Asians" and as a cover for Soviet designs of "aggression and expansion" against the Asian countries, aimed at robbing them of their sovereignty and independence.[24] Other Chinese statements accused the Soviet Union of trying to play in Asia the same "trick" that it played in Eastern Europe in reducing the East European countries to the status of "Soviet colonies,"[25] and charged that the Soviet suggestions for regional economic cooperation were a "trap" for carrying out "political control" and "economic plunder" of the Asian countries.[26]

There was also a warning from quite a different quarter. General Jesus Vargas, Filipino Secretary-General of SEATO, cautioned the Asian countries to make a careful appraisal of the Soviet proposal for an Asian collective security system. The Soviet scheme, he said, "entails the very real danger that in time the regional countries may find themselves subjected to rigid external political domination which denies them the right to determine their own domestic policies." He also warned that any increase in Soviet influence in Asia might prompt Communist China to step up its support of subversive and insurgent elements inside various Asian countries.[27]

In the light of the overwhelmingly negative reaction of the Asian countries, the prospects for realization of the Soviet scheme of collective security for Asia appear extremely remote. These prospects might be improved if the UN were to lend its support to the Brezhnev plan as part of a network of regional security arrangements within the UN framework, but this, too, seems improbable in view of the thinly-disguised anti-Chinese purpose of the Soviet-proposed Asian security system. Meanwhile the Asian countries appear disposed to stay clear of commitments that would involve them in the Sino-Soviet struggle for power in Asia, while at the same time accepting the Soviet presence in the region as a useful counterweight to Communist China.

Nevertheless, Moscow does not appear to have abandoned its hopes of becoming the protector of Asia, evidently basing these hopes on the assumption that Communist China will continue its belligerent, expansionist policies vis-a-vis its Asian neighbors. China's intransigence, coupled with the reduction of Western power and commitments in Asia, could—in Moscow's estimation—ultimately present the Soviet Union with an opportunity to gain dominant influence in the area. Whether or not such an opportunity will materialize thus depends in large measure on the future course of Communist China.

[22] Associated Press of Pakistan, July 10, 1969.
[23] *The Statesman* (New Delhi), Sept. 23, 1969.
[24] New China News Agency, July 13 and August 18, 1969.
[25] *Ibid.*, June 28, 1969.
[26] *Ibid.*, July 11, 1969.
[27] *Times of India*, Sept. 9, 1969.

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DOCUMENTS

EDITORS' NOTE: The following two items are taken from issues Nos. 9 (Aug. 31, 1969) and 10 (Oct. 31, 1969), respectively, of Chronicle of Current Events *(Khronika tekushchikh sobytii), and unofficial bimonthly journal that has been appearing in Moscow regularly since April 30, 1968. The journal consists of anywhere between 20 and 50 closely-spaced mimeographed sheets of paper, and contains detailed descriptions of current political repressions in the Soviet Union (arrests, trials, confinements to "special psychiatric hospitals", etc.) as well as of political protest activities (petitions, demonstrations, hunger strikes, "underground publications"). The first ten issues are to appear in full in a forthcoming volume called* Underground Russia, *edited and with an introduction by Peter Reddaway. The translations below are taken from Mr. Reddaway's book; the explanatory notes are ours.*

1. The Case of Yuri Levin

As reported in No. 8 of the *Chronicles*, Yuri Leonidovich Levin has been arrested in Leningrad. On June 26, 1969, he was summoned to appear before an investigator of the Leningrad Procurator's Office, Yu. M. Tumanov, and was taken into custody. He was charged under Article 190-1[1] of the Russian [RSFSR] Criminal Code, and not, as stated in No. 8, under Article 70.[2]

In 1957 Levin had been sentenced to ten years' imprisonment under Article 58-1A,[3] but he had been amnestied in 1964 after doing seven years of his term. The reason for his conviction was that he had attempted to emigrate.

Since 1966 he has sent several letters by registered post to the "Voice of America." According to him, the letters were quite "innocent," contained nothing political, and were addressed to one of the lady announcers of the "Voice of America." However, they obviously were not reaching their destination, and Levin repeatedly complained about this to the Leningrad Post Office, to no avail. Finally, said Levin, he decided to "set a trap" for the KGB. To this end, he addressed a registered letter to the American Embassy in Moscow declaring that the sending of troops into Czechoslovakia was a criminal offense under Article 73 of the Russian Criminal Code. Levin assumed that the KGB would take steps on this [by intercepting his letter] and thus unmask themselves as readers of private correspondence by means of X-ray techniques. The letter was sent on October 12, 1968, and at the beginning of November of the same year Levin was put in a psychiatric hospital on the orders of Belyaev, the chief psychiatrist of Leningrad. Ten days later he was declared healthy and discharged.

In March 1969 Levin complained to the Procurator's Office that his letters were systematically going astray. On May 23, 1969, he was summoned to the district office of the KGB on Vasilevsky Island and was presented with the following statement to sign: "During a customs examination, a letter written by Yu. L. Levin and addressed to the American Embassy in Moscow was found and confiscated, its contents being of a clearly anti-Soviet nature." Here it may be recalled that, under the Russian Criminal Code, interference with private correspondence is classed as a criminal offense. Nevertheless, a few days later, the party activist group at the Institute of Mechanical Processing, where Levin was employed as a mechanic, discussed in Levin's presence the letter he had written to the Embassy (the text of which had been furnished by the KGB), condemned him, and passed a resolution "to request the Procurator's Office to institute criminal proceedings against Levin for slanderous anti-Soviet statements sent to our enemies. . . . "

On June 24, 1969, searches were made of Levin's flat and country cottage. He himself handed over all his correspondence with the "Voice of America" as well as some tape-recordings of VOA transmissions which he had managed to pick up in spite of jamming. Apart from this, the search produced nothing significant. The next day Levin was arrested.

[1] Article 190-1 makes the "circulation of known falsehoods derogatory to the Soviet state and social system" punishable by "deprivation of freedom" for a period of up to three years. —Ed.

[2] Article 70 provides that "agitation or propaganda" aimed at subverting Soviet authority or committing "certain especially dangerous crimes against the state," or the preparation, circulation or possession of literature having the same aims shall be punishable by "deprivation of freedom" for a period of six months to seven years, with or without additional exile for two to five years.—Ed.

[3] Article 58-1A of the RSFSR Criminal Code, which was in force from 1934 to 1960, included "flight abroad" among acts constituting "treason." Such acts were punishable by death or, in the case of "mitigating circumstances," by imprisonment for ten years with confiscation of all property.—Ed.

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2. The Case of M. P. Yakubovich

Mikhail Petrovich Yakubovich was born in 1891. He is a great-grandson of the Decembrist A. I. Yakubovich [1] and a nephew of the poet and revolutionary P. F. Yakubovich.[2] From his youth he worked for the revolutionary movement in Russia. He was first arrested while a high-school student in the 6th class. At first he was a Bolshevik, but after the start of the First World War he disagreed with the Bolsheviks on the question of the war and joined the Menshevik fraction of the Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party.

M. P. Yakubovich played an active part in the 1917 Revolution. He was elected the first Chairman of the Smolensk Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies and was co-opted into the Petrograd Soviet as Representative of the Western Front. He was also elected a member of the All-Union Central Executive Committee of the Soviets (VTsIK) of the First Convocation, as well as of the VTsIK Bureau. At the time of the Kornilov Putsch,[3] while acting as Commissar of the Provisional Government attached to the First Army, he arrested General Denikin.[4] After the October Revolution, M. P. Yakubovich occupied a leading position in the Menshevik faction of the Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party and tried to persuade the Mensheviks to cooperate actively with the Bolsheviks and with the Soviet regime. He himself was then serving as Food Supply Commissar for Smolensk province—the only Menshevik holding a position as provincial commissar in Soviet Russia. When the attempt at a Menshevik-Bolshevik rapprochement failed, Yakubovich left the party in 1920 but went on to serve in various executive positions in central Soviet institutions: as Director of the State Funds Commission of the Council of Labor and Defense, as Chief of the Manufactured Goods Administration of the USSR People's Trade Commissariat, etc. He also was the author of a number of articles and larger works on economic policy and socialist construction.

In 1930 Yakubovich was arrested, and in the 1931 trial of the [alleged] "Menshevik All-Union Bureau," [5] he was sentenced to ten years' imprisonment. From 1931 to 1939, he was held in the political wing of Verkhneuralsk Prison. In 1936 [Grigori] Zinoviev and [Lev] Kamenev were in the same prison. In 1939 he was transferred to Orlov Prison, and then to the Unzhlag camps (now Kostroma region).

In 1941, soon after his term expired, and while he was employed as a free worker in the Unzhlag camps, Yakubovich was rearrested and sentenced *in absentia* to an additional ten years by the Special Board of the NKVD.[6] In 1950 he was transferred to Spassk, near Karaganda, in the Peschlag camp [complex.] He later described his journey from the northern camps to those of Karaganda in an unpublished story entitled "The Red Rose."

After spending almost a quarter of a century in confinement, M. P. Yakubovich was at last released in 1953, two years after his second term of imprisonment had expired. He was then sent to the Tikhonov Home for Invalids in Karaganda, where until 1955 he remained subject to enforced exile, and where he is still living at the present time. He commands enormous respect and authority, and despite his advancing years he leads an active public life as Chairman of the Cultural Commission, which is in practice the invalids' organ of self-government, through which they can defend their rights and interests vis-à-vis the administration. It is largely thanks to Yakubovich's efforts that the Tikhonov Home is notable for its relatively easygoing regime compared with other invalid homes.

In 1956 M. P, Yakubovich was rehabilitated insofar as his second conviction was concerned, and in 1961 he sent a letter to the 22nd CPSU Congress asking for a review of the "All-Union Bureau" trial. The Procurator-General's Office answered that the guilt of Yakubovich and the others convicted with him had been proven by the preliminary and court investigations, as well as by the confessions of the accused themselves. Soon after that, E. D. Stasova[7] addressed a similar request to N. S. Khrushchev but received no reply.

In 1966 M. P. Yakubovich was awarded a special pension. Then, in 1967, he was summoned from Karaganda to Moscow, to the office of the Procurator-General. There he was [first] questioned in an informal talk, without any written record, about the circumstances of the "All-Union Bureau" trial, and he was then asked to put down in writing everything he had related. In his written explanation addressed to the Procurator-General, M. P. Yaku-

[1] Aleksandr Ivanovich Yakubovich (1792-1845) was a Tsarist cavalry officer and member of the "Decembrist" movement, a revolutionary society of liberal-minded aristocrats. For his part in the abortive Decembrist uprising of 1825, he was exiled to Siberia.—Ed.

[2] Piotr Filippovich Yakubovich (1860-1911) was a poet, writer and literary critic, and one of the leading members of the populist revolutionary-terrorist underground organization "Narodnaia Volia," which aimed at establishing a democratic, populist republic in Russia.—Ed.

[3] General Lavr G. Kornilov (1870-1918) was commander-in-chief of the Russian armed forces under the Provisional Government of Aleksandr Kerensky. In September 1917 he attempted to seize control of the government by means of an armed "Putsch," which failed when Kerensky succeeded in mobilizing sufficient loyal forces in Petrograd.—Ed.

[4] General Anton I. Denikin (1872-1947) was implicated in the Kornilov Putsch, for which he was arrested by the Kerensky government. He later became commander-in-chief of the White Russian Army in the Civil War, operating in southern Russia and the Ukraine. After some initial successes against the Bolsheviks, he was defeated, resigned his command, and went into exile.—Ed.

[5] The "Menshevik All-Union Bureau"—or, as it was officially called in the indictment, the All-Union Bureau of the CC RSDLP (*Soiuznoe Biuro TsK RSDRP*)— was alleged to have been organized by a group of Mensheviks in 1928 with the aim of carrying on anti-Soviet activity. Fourteen of its "members" were put on trial in February 1931.—Ed.

[6] The Special Board (*Osoboe soveshchanie*, or OSO) was established as part of the NKVD in 1934 and was empowered, without court trial, to sentence "persons considered socially dangerous" to exile, deportation, or confinement in "corrective labor camps" up to five years.—Ed.

[7] Elena Dmitrievna Stasova (1873-1966), an old Bolshevik and party member since 1898. She was elected a candidate-member of the Central Committee created at the All-Russian Party Conference in Prague in 1912, which marked Lenin's final break with the Mensheviks, and after the October 1917 Revolution she worked in the Party Secretariat. Consigned to almost total obscurity by Stalin for nearly two decades, she reappeared, at the age of eighty-two, at the 20th Party Congress in February 1956.—Ed.

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bovich, the only surviving participant in one of the public political trials of the 1930's, relates in detail how this trial was staged.[8]

"No 'Menshevik All-Union Bureau' ever existed," writes M. P. Yakubovich, and he then goes on to tell how this [alleged] "sabotage organization" was fabricated by the OGPU organs. The investigative organs made up the "All-Union Bureau" by selecting from each of the main economic organizations—the All-Union National Economic Council, the People's Trade Commissariat, the State Planning Commission, and the Union of Consumers' Cooperatives—a proportionate number of well-known and influential staff members. These persons were honest workers in the state apparatus who had [either] left the Menshevik party a long time ago or, in some instances, had never even belonged to it. By means of promises, threats, and torture, applied on a strictly individual basis according to the degree of resistance encountered, these people were forced to "confess" to counterrevolutionary sabotage.

M. P. Yakubovich explains his conduct at the trial by saying that to have retracted the testimony he had given during the investigation would in his opinion have wrecked the trial and caused a worldwide scandal which at that time could have damaged the Soviet regime and the Communist Party. In addition to that, it would have meant condemning himself to a slow and agonizing death by torture. If he had really been an enemy of the Soviet regime and the Communist Party, he might possibly have found the moral strength to give him courage. But he was not an enemy. On the eve of the trial, the state Prosecutor [of the RSFSR], N. V. Krylenko, who had been a close acquaintance of Yakubovich since before the Revolution, urged him to confirm in open court the testimony he had given in the preliminary investigation, adding: "I do not doubt that you personally are not guilty of anything. [But] we shall both be doing our duty to the party. I always considered you, and still do consider you, a Communist. . . ."

During that same visit to Moscow in May 1967, Yakubovich met A. I. Mikoyan, whose deputy he had been on the eve of his arrest.[9] During their conversation, Mikoyan admitted that he had never doubted Yakubovich's innocence, but said that there was nothing he could have done for him at the time. As to possibility of a review of the 1931 trial, Mikoyan gave Yakubovich to understand that the question would ultimately be decided not by the Procurator-General's Office but by some higher authority; that, however, for the present, this authority considered it an inopportune time to review political trials and grant new rehabilitations.

Instead of a reply by the Procurator-General's Office [to Yakubovich's request for a review of the 1931 trial], the journal *Voprosy Istorii* (Problems of History), in late 1967 and early 1968, published a series of articles by Senior Legal Counsellor D. L. Golinkov. In a section entitled "The Anti-Soviet Activities of the Mensheviks" (No. 2, 1968), the author—making use, among other things, of Yakubovich's testimony at the trial—wrote about the "All-Union Bureau" in the same vein as articles dating from the Stalin era.[10]

While in the invalid home, Yakubovich has occupied himself with literary work. In addition to the story mentioned above ("The Red Rose"), he has written: "The Death of Boris Godunov," a historical-literary work in which he gives his reasons for believing that Godunov was not implicated in the death of the Tsarevich Dmitri; "Christianity and Hinduism," an essay on ethics and philosophy, which attempts to show the moral superiority of Hinduism; "What is Time?," a philosophical analysis of the concept of time in Einstein's theory of relativity; "Tolstoy's and Galsworthy's Attitudes towards Death"; and "Letters to a Stranger," a series of political character-sketches written from a Leninist standpoint and based to a considerable extent on personal recollections and little-known facts (three of the sketches in this series—on Stalin, Kamenev and Trotsky—were completed in 1966-67; and a fourth, on Zinoviev, remains unfinished).

On April 24, 1968, M. P. Yakubovich's room was searched, and all his manuscripts and letters were taken away. At the same time the Karaganda KGB began an investigation of Yakubovich under the article of the Kazakh Criminal Code corresponding to Article 190-1[11] of the Rusian Criminal Code. Two of his friends were also implicated in the case, accused of "passing things around." The behavior of the investigator, Major Kovalenko, chief of the KGB investigation department, was—at least as far as Yakubovich was concerned—correct in all respects. The interrogation records were an accurate reflection of Yakubovich's testimony. But the experts' analytical report on Yakubovich's writings was in complete contrast to the propriety of the investigation. The experts—Gorokhov and Mustafin, professors in the Social Science departments of Karaganda's Polytechnic Institute and Medical Institute respectively, and a third person who has not been identified—wrote their conclusions in the spirit of the worst examples of the Stalin period. Their report contained crude insults and abuse. Distorting and falsifying the sense and content of Yakubovich's writings, they accused him of provocation, counterrevolution, ideological subversion, propagation of Menshevik ideology, slander of Marxism-Leninism, etc. All this related not only to his memoirs and political writings, but to his philosophical, literary and historical works as well.

Despite the experts' findings, the case was closed on instructions from Moscow on June 24, when the two-month period allowed by law for the preliminary investigation ended. The letters which had been removed during the search were returned, but all the manuscripts, the fruit of many years' labor, were kept by the KGB in its file of "criminal cases."

M. P. Yakubovich's address is: Kazakh SSR, Karaganda 1, Tikhonov Home for Invalids.

[8] Dated May 5, 1967.—Ed.

[9] Mikoyan was at that time People's Commissar of Foreign and Domestic Trade.—Ed.

[10] D.L. Golinkov, "The Destruction of the Hotbeds of Domestic Counterrevolution in Soviet Russia: A Documentary Outline," *Voprosy istorii*, No. 12 (1967), pp. 131-44; No. 1 (1968), pp. 133-49; and No. 2 (1968), pp. 148-65.—Ed.

[11] See footnote 1, preceding document.—Ed.

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